



JAN W.J. BURGERS

# The Lute in the Dutch Golden Age

Musical Culture in the Netherlands 1580-1670

AMSTERDAM UNIVERSITY PRESS

AMSTERDAM STUDIES IN THE DUTCH GOLDEN AGE

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*Jan W.J. Burgers*

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## PREFACE

In the 16th and 17th centuries, the lute played a role in musical life similar to that of the piano in the 19th century. It was the universal instrument for solo music-making, whether the music played was solo music written specially for it, or arrangements of the popular sacred and secular vocal repertoire. It also figured in ensembles and was used to accompany singers. The lute had an aristocratic aura; although it was certainly not unknown among the common people, it was mainly considered to be the instrument of the social elite, the aristocracy and prosperous burghers. In other art forms enjoyed by the upper circles, such as literature and painting, the lute was a ubiquitous phenomenon. The instrument remained popular in the 17th and 18th centuries, although it was gradually supplanted by the guitar and the harpsichord.

In the 16th century and in the early 17th century, the lute played an important part in the culture of the top layer of society in the Netherlands, as it did elsewhere. The young Republic of the Seven United Provinces flourished remarkably in many areas of the arts and sciences. In the first quarter of the 17th century, the art of the lute reached a high-point to equal that of other major cultural centres in Europe. Although the stream of new music for the instrument dried up after 1625, the lute remained prominent in Dutch paintings of that century.

This book wishes to present, for the first time, a study of the position of the lute in what is called the Golden Age in the Netherlands. All aspects of the instrument will be discussed: celebrated and unknown lutenists, professional musicians and talented (or less talented) amateurs, lute music in print and in manuscript, lute builders and the trade in lutes. We will also look at the role of the instrument in literature and art, thus offering a contribution to the cultural history of the Dutch Republic. The book will throw more light on the musical life of the Golden Age, an aspect of that culture which has, until now, been rather underexposed in research.

This study is primarily aimed at bringing together the fruits of existing research. Since the end of the 19th century, musicological and archival studies have been undertaken into music



in the Golden Age in general. Such research has clearly gained momentum in recent decades as a result of a revived interest in Early Music, illustrated by the publications of Rudolf Rasch and Louis Grijp. But where the lute is concerned, it has never seemed to go beyond occasional and fragmented research. As exceptions, we should mention the studies and editions by Louis Grijp, and several contributions by the present writer. The lute in the Southern Netherlands has been extensively documented by Godelieve Spiessens. The present book also profits from research into cultural areas such as painting and emblems in which the role of the lute is mentioned; the name of Eddy de Jongh is inextricably linked with this subject. Some of the related fields have been covered by specialists: Simon Groot writes about music printing and picture motets and about Valerius' *Nederlandtsche Gedenck-clanck*, while Jack Scholten discusses lesser-known lutenists in Leiden. Through combining archive research by earlier scholars, both printed and unprinted, and supplementing the results with new findings, it is now possible to give the first coherent overview of all aspects of Dutch lute culture in the 16th and 17th centuries. We thus have a clear picture of the emergence, rise and decline of the instrument in the Golden Age.

I am now left with the pleasant task of offering a word of thanks to Professor Lia van Gemert and the editorial board of the *Amsterdam Studies in the Dutch Golden Age* series, who wished to add this book to their series; to Amsterdam University Press for the constructive supervision of this book's production; and especially to Simon Groot, Professor Eddy de Jongh, Willem Mook and Dr. Ton van Strien, who have commented critically on the text or parts of it, much to my benefit. I remain, of course, entirely responsible for the end result. Simon Groot, David Van Edwards and Andreas Schlegel kindly provided me with some pictures. Lastly I have to thank Neel de Boer, who not only proofread the entire text and assisted in making the index, but was also generous enough to put up with the fact that for some months, most of the time and the attention of the undersigned was taken up by a book that had to be written.

Amsterdam, January 2013

JWJ B

## CHAPTER 1

### The Lute and Its Music in Europe

#### *The early history of the lute in a nutshell*

The lute plays an important part in European music history from the Middle Ages to the Baroque. An enormous repertoire for the instrument has come down to us, particularly from the period between 1500 and 1760. Nobody knows exactly how many works there once were, but a rough estimate would suggest approximately 48,000, mostly for solo lute. This is the total number of published and hand-written compositions; there are, however, a large number of copies of identical compositions, so the number of individual works is a great deal lower. On the other hand, a large part of the repertoire has been lost. In addition, the lute was often used in ensembles, more specifically as an accompanying instrument for one or more singers.

The European lute has its origins in the Middle East. In the Arabic world, the lute, *al-'ud* (literally: 'the wood'), was apparently adopted in the seventh century from the Persians, who in turn owed it to the Indian culture of the region that is now known as Afghanistan. The lute rapidly rose to high esteem in Arabic culture. In writings from the 10th century onwards it is described as 'the most perfect instrument' and 'the Sultan of instruments'. When Arabic culture spread to areas conquered by Muslims, such as Sicily and the Iberian Peninsula, Europeans, too, became acquainted with the lute.

The first European references to lutes in writing and pictures date from the middle of the 13th century, for instance in the famous manuscript with the *Cantigas de Santa Maria*, made for King Alfonso the Wise (1221-1284) of Castile (Plate 1). The lute spread quickly. It became particularly popular in Italy, but even in the remote parish church of Steeple Aston in England, we find pictures of lutes dating from shortly after 1300 (Plate 2). Incidentally, these clearly show that the instrument was played with a plectrum.

From the last quarter of the 13th century onwards, lutenists appear in royal and noble households, also north of the Alps and Pyrenees. During the 14th century, the instrument spread

further, now also appearing in urban culture. In the 15th century, the lute was an important instrument in the royal courts. It was played in polyphonic, secular compositions, but also in dance music where the player improvised on standard harmonic and rhythmic patterns. At the end of that century lutenists were exploring the possibilities of playing with the fingers instead of a plectrum, which made it possible to play polyphonic music. It meant that contrapuntal vocal compositions could be played in their entirety on the lute. As lute music became more complex and increasingly written for this specific instrument, the need arose for lute music notation. In the years leading up to 1500, this led to the invention of lute tablature, a fingering notation. In the same period, such tablatures were developed for other instruments, such as the organ and the harp. However, musical improvisation continued to be part of the lute culture.

Throughout the 16th century, the lute was undoubtedly the most important musical instrument. It owed that position to its versatility, and to the fact that it had been, since the advent of humanism, associated with real or imagined ancestors in Classical Antiquity; the equally versatile keyboard instruments lacked that connection with the revered Ancients. Some lutenists were prominent and highly appreciated artists. The famous Francesco da Milano (1497–1543) was employed by cardinals and popes (and probably also briefly by the French king); his sublime playing had earned him the nickname ‘Il Divino’ (Plate 3). Francesco’s output, consisting of around 100 fantasias and 30 intabulations of vocal compositions, has been handed down in many printed and handwritten sources; the dance music he would also have played was probably improvised, and was for that reason not written down. In addition, we also know the names and works of dozens of other similarly talented Italian lutenists. From the second quarter of the 16th century onwards, a lute culture also developed in France, Germany and Central Europe, with prominent composers who had their works printed.

The importance of the lute in musical culture is evident from statements by authoritative theoreticians and musicians. In 1618, the German composer and theoretician Michael Praetorius called the lute ‘fundamentum et initium’, the basis and the origin. A contemporary described the lute as ‘principem quasi et Reginam musicorum instrumentorum omnium’ [the prince and probably the Queen of all musical instruments].

The prominent position of the lute in musical life is also highlighted in the visual arts of the period. Two engravings by Cornelis Cort from Antwerp, based on paintings by Frans Floris (c.1519–1570), representing *Hearing* and *Music* respectively, are significant here. *Hearing* (1561) depicts a large number of musical instruments, but the lute has the leading role, for it is the instrument played by the female central figure who represents the sense of hearing. Lying next to her is a deer, because that animal is said to have very sharp hearing. In *Music* (in or after 1565), three singers (and a bird) are accompanied on the virginal by a female figure, who represents Musica, and two lutenists: a younger and an older man. Against the wall and on the floor there are many other musical instruments; among them is a very true-to-life picture of a cittern. These prints illustrate once again the humanist worldview, imbued as it was with the Classics, in which the lute, too, played its part.

Cornelis Cort, *Auditus* (Hearing). Engraving, 1561Cornelis Cort, *Musica* (Music). Engraving, 1565 or later



Tuning of the six-course lute, late 16th century

### *The historical development of the lute*

The lute belongs to the chordophones, the stringed instruments, and within that category to plucked instruments. In principle, the construction of a lute is simple (Plate 4). The sound box consists of a pear-shaped pinewood soundboard or belly, in the centre of which a decorated sound hole is cut out, and a semi-circular resonator built up from a number of slim wooden ribs. Attached to this corpus is the neck, to which the fingerboard is glued. The strings are attached to the sound box by means of a wooden bridge and run up the fingerboard to the top, where they are attached to tuning pegs; these are located in a peg box that is fixed to the neck at an angle of nearly 90 degrees. To improve the tone production and to facilitate playing in tune, the fingerboard is divided by frets formed by catgut strings tied around the neck.

A lute is usually equipped with double strings, the so-called ‘courses’; only the highest string is generally single. The medieval lute had only four or five courses, but around 1500 an extra bass course was added, which led to the ‘classical’ six-course lute that would remain the standard throughout the 16th century. The tuning pitch varied according to the size of the instrument, but for the tenor lute, the instrument favoured for solo playing and voice accompaniment, a tuning based on G for the lowest course was used. Just like the modern guitar, lutes were tuned in fourths, but unlike the guitar, there was an interval of a major third between the third and the fourth course. For technical reasons of sound production, the bass course usually consists of one bass string and one string tuned an octave higher.

In the 16th century, some lutenists already used an additional seventh bass course for a greater range on the bass side. Around 1600, the demand for them had increased so much that the seventh course had become generally applied; it was either one tone lower than the sixth course, thus F, or a fourth lower, D. In the next two decades the number of bass courses increased, so that in 1620 a ten-course lute was quite common (Plate 5). The extra bass courses 7 to 10 were diatonically tuned. Later, an eleventh and a twelfth course could be added. The result of these expansions with four to six courses of strings meant that the fingerboard had to be a lot broader and older instruments had to be thoroughly adapted.

Lute strings were made of sheep gut, but that material does not function so well in the bass (see the explanation on p. 167); this was the reason for combining them with octave strings. The French lutenist Jacques Gaultier, who lived in England, introduced another feature to make the sound of the bass strings more satisfactory: he made the strings longer. He attached a second,



Tuning of the ten-course lute, around 1620

longer peg box to the neck of the lute especially to accommodate the longer bass courses. A portrait of Gaultier, dating from the early 1630s, shows him holding such an instrument (see p. 146). According to the *Burwell Lute Tutor*, an English manuscript from c.1660–1672, this innovation was generally accepted, yet after some years the French masters returned to the lute with a single peg box. In the Netherlands the ‘double-headed lute’ must have been very popular, because we see them in many paintings from around the middle of the 17th century. The standard at that time was the twelve-course instrument (Plate 6). Because of the lengthened bass strings, which are also used on the theorbo (see below) this type is known as the theorboed lute. To add to the confusion, this type of lute was referred to as *theorbe* in contemporary England and Holland.

Many lutes in Dutch paintings from that period show a new detail: a parchment band covering the connection between the belly and the corpus. Its purpose would not so much have been to act as reinforcement, as to provide a neat covering for the joint between belly and corpus. This could become jagged after the belly had been removed several times during repairs or adaptations, for example, to attach a wider neck.

Once lutes had been equipped with ten to twelve courses, people in France began to experiment in the 1620s and 1630s with different tunings; we shall see, by the way, that the Dutch lutenist Joachim van den Hove had already done this in the first decade of the century. Eventually one particular tuning became the most common, and that *accord nouveau*, in which the upper six courses form a D-minor chord, became the norm in France in the late 1630s, after which the rest of Europe followed. Only the bass strings always had to be re-tuned according to the key of the composition. At the same time the French introduced the eleven-course lute as the standard instrument, with all the strings ending up in one and the same peg box. Both the first and second course were now single-stringed.

The eleven-course lute with *accord nouveau* was introduced in the Netherlands in the middle of the 17th century. We know from Constantijn Huygens’ correspondence that he decided to try out the new tunings in 1653. In a letter to the French composer Pierre de la Barre Sr, dated 1 December of that year, he wrote about some of his own recent lute compositions, which he enclosed: ‘these are my very first attempts in this field, since it is only in the past few weeks that I have been trying out the new tunings, of which the one used here seems to be among the most melodious’. By 1680 the D-minor tuning had been Huygens’ standard tuning for some time: in a letter to Michael Döring in Hamburg he states that he always keeps his lute in the same tuning, apart from an occasional bass string, although his many compositions make use of all possible





Frans van Mieris the elder, *The lute player* (1663). Present whereabouts unknown





*Tuning of the eleven-course Baroque lute, second half of the 17th century*

keys, both major and minor. This is in contrast to the French, who apparently sometimes also re-tuned the six higher courses for playing in specific keys.

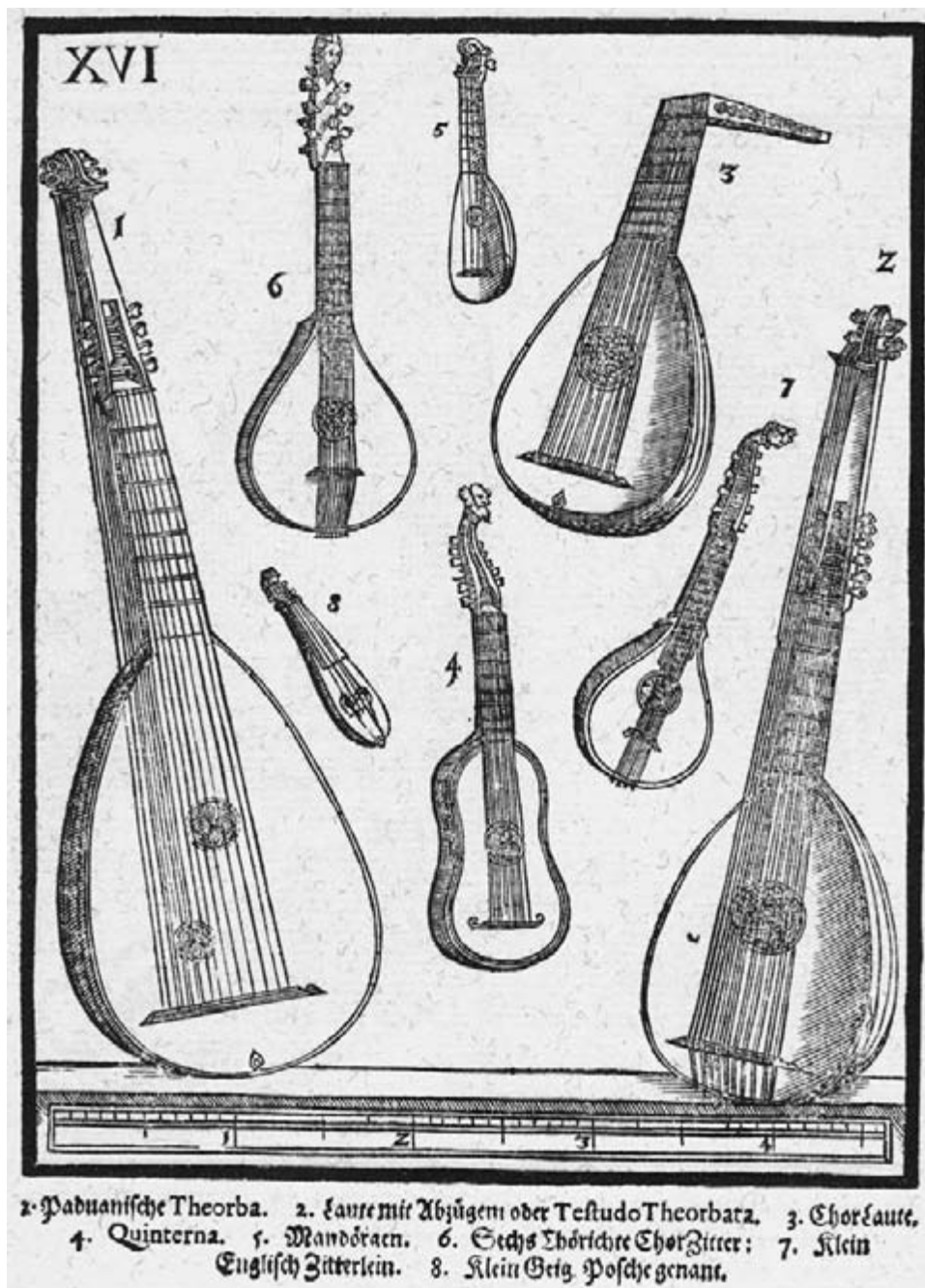
### *Related instruments*

Throughout the history of the lute, many related instruments have been in use. Some of them were directly derived from the lute, others were more superficially related in the sense that they were stringed instruments with a corpus and a long fingerboard. In the 17th century, some of these related instruments were highly popular. A number of them will be dealt with later in some detail, and it is therefore useful to include a short description of them here.

### Theorbo and archlute

At the end of the 16th century, Italians invented the *chitarrone* or *tiorba*, a large bass lute that had been adapted for the accompaniment of singers by lengthening the neck with the peg box and adding bass strings, so that it became a fourteen-course instrument with eight long bass courses (or single strings) tuned diatonically. Because of the size of the instrument and thus the length of the strings, the highest string or the highest two strings, which were single, were tuned an octave lower. This distinguished the instrument from the theorboed lute, which was the size of the normal lute with the two highest strings in ordinary lute tuning. The concept then spread to other countries, where it was called a *theorbo* or *théorbe*, or in Dutch *theorbe*. Outside Italy the theorbo only seems to have gained ground after 1650. It was used as an accompanying instrument, and the solo music written for it may have been performed on a slightly smaller model. The theorbo was still played in the 18th century; it was also used as an accompanying instrument in chamber ensembles and orchestras.

The *arciliuto* appeared in Italy around 1600. Again, it was a lute-like instrument with a lengthened neck and added bass strings, but in a smaller format so that it was possible to retain standard lute tuning. There is quite a lot of solo music for this instrument, but it was also used for accompaniment. After around 1680, by which time metal-covered strings had been invented – which gave the shorter bass strings of the archlute more power – it was also used elsewhere as an accompanying instrument.



Page from Michael Praetorius' *Theatrum instrumentorum* (1620) with pictures of a lute (3), a theorbo-lute (2), a theorbo (1), citrerns (6, 7), a guitar (4), a mandora (5) and a *pochette* or dance masters' violin (8)

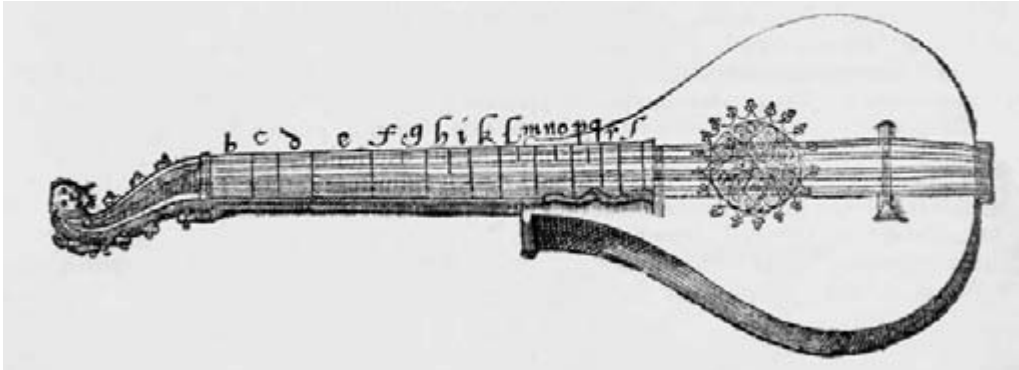


N. Bonnard, *Damon jouant de l'Angélique*. Engraving, 1687

## Angelica

The inventory of instruments and equipment left in the workshop of the Amsterdam instrument maker Gerrit Menslage (1670), which we will be discussing later, mentions another instrument related to the lute: the *angélique* or angelica. It was a combination of a lute, a theorbo and a harp: it has the shape and overall string length of the lute, but single stringing and lengthened bass strings as on the theorbo, while the strings are diatonically tuned throughout as on a harp, although there were also tunings in which the highest five strings form a D-minor chord as on the Baroque lute. The advantage of diatonic tuning was that open strings could often be played, which resulted in a full, clear tone colour. The angelica may have owed its name to the sound: the angel-like (lute).

The instrument is first mentioned by Michael Praetorius in his *Theatrum instrumentorum* (1620). The period of the angelica's greatest popularity, however, was the second half of the 17th century and the beginning of the 18th. Yet very little music for it was published or transmitted in manuscript form. Christiaan Huygens heard an ensemble of five angelicas playing in Paris in 1661. Menslage's inventory shows that angelicas were known in the Dutch Republic as well, but not to such a degree that the maker of the inventory could spell the name without problems! He first wrote 'ansijlick', and subsequently 'corrected' it as 'anghchlijck'.



Woodcut of a cittern in Pierre Phalèse & Jean Bellère (eds.), *Hortulus Cytharæ* (Louvain, 1570).  
The tablature letters that go with the frets are written along the fingerboard

## Cittern

A cittern is a stringed instrument with an onion-shaped corpus and a sound box that is flat at the back. There are metal frets on the fingerboard; these are rather unusually arranged, because the semitones do not run all the way across the fingerboard. Cittern strings, usually four courses of two or three strings, are made of metal, brass or copper wire and are struck with a plectrum.

There were several types of citterns in circulation with different tunings and numbers of strings, which could vary from four to six courses. To judge by their representations in pictures, varying formats were available. Proof of the extraordinary popularity of the instrument in the 16th century is the large number of music publications for it that rolled off Pierre Phalèse's presses in Louvain and Antwerp. Especially intriguing is a volume of cittern music published by Jan Pieterszoon Sweelinck in 1602 and reprinted in 1608, but which has nevertheless been lost; we only know of its existence from bibliographical references.

Other volumes with cittern music were published in the Republic around the same time, but none have survived. In 1607 the States General issued a printing license to a certain Willem de Swert (Swarte), originally from Arnhem but living in Amsterdam, to publish a *citerbouck* by hem gecomponeert van vijftich psalmen Davidts ende achtende vijftich mysick stucken ende lydekens, tzamen maeckende hondert ende acht stuck, in tabelature, geintituleert Cortte wechwijser ter deucht [cittern book composed by him, including fifty psalms of David, and fifty-eight pieces of music and songs, altogether a hundred and eight pieces, in tablature, entitled Short guide to virtue]. And in 1612 the publisher Jan Janszoon in Arnhem published a book by the Utrecht cittern and violin maker Michiel Vredeman, called *Der violen cyther met vyf snaren, een nieuwe soorte melodieuze inventie, twe naturen hebbende, vier parthyen spelende, licht te leeren, half violens, half cyther, zynen naem metbrengende, om alderley musicke te speelen, sonder een note van de musick te verstaan, so wel voor die violens, als voor die cyther, ettelicken musickstucken opgesett, ende in tablatuer gebracht* [the violin cittern with five strings, a new kind of musical invention, having two characteristics,

able to play four parts, easy to learn, half violin, half cittern, as its name tells us, to play all kinds of music, without being able to play a note of music, for violins as well as for citterns, several pieces written out, and set in tablature]. The title suggests that the music was written for a new type of instrument, with five courses, which combined the qualities of the viol and the cittern. Thanks to the tablature notation, the player did not need to be able to read music; the recommendation shows that the book was not aimed at the most educated section of society. An inventory made in Leeuwarden in 1618 mentions another publication by the same Michiel Vredeman, with the title *Der Cyteren lusthoff* [Cythera's garden], as well as *Le jardinet de cythère* [The Garden of Cythera]. They are certainly not identical to *Der violen cyther*. It is more likely that they represent another book of cittern music, published in parallel editions with French and Dutch title pages. We will come across this procedure more often.

The cittern remained a popular instrument throughout the Golden Age. We can deduce this from its many appearances in paintings, where we often see the instrument in the hands of rich young ladies, such as in the well-known *The Love Letter* by Vermeer. However, peasants too are depicted with citterns. Around 1662 Jan Steen painted a woman, possibly his wife Grietje van Goyen, with the instrument (Plate 7).

The popularity of the cittern, particularly in the first half of the 17th century, is highlighted by the fact that in Amsterdam the word 'cittern maker' applied to the builders of all stringed instruments (see p. 159). It is also significant that the 1647 catalogue of the Amsterdam bookseller Hendrik Laurentius contains a remarkable amount of cittern music, including the volumes by Sweelinck and Vredeman that have since been lost. Incidentally, Laurentius also had lute books: one by Vallet (*Compositie van Valet, in 4*), *Hortus musicalis* by Elias Mertel (Strasbourg 1615) and lute settings of the Psalms of David by Daniel Laelius (Arnhem 1617).

Even in the early 18th century, the poet Jacobus Oudaan describes in his volume *Poëzy* (Amsterdam 1712) young people who go boating on the river and start to sing and play the fiddle and the cittern:

Een lietges-bouk	<i>A songbook is</i>
Dan uit de houk	<i>And people begin</i>
Ghaelt word, en men tyt'er	<i>Aen 't soet gequeel</i>
Of strykt de veel	<i>Or to play the viol</i>
Of slaet'er op een cyther.	<i>Or to strike the cittern.</i>

### Lute cittern

Louis Grijp and Dirk Jacob Hamoen have drawn our attention to a very special kind of lute found only in seven paintings by the Dutch painter Pieter de Hoogh. The canvases date from the last period of the artist's life, after he had moved to Amsterdam in 1668; he probably died there in the 1680s. The paintings show the luxury of the 'upper ten'; De Hoogh had become a society painter. There are dozens of musical instruments in these paintings: Grijp and Hamoen not



only listed a number of wind, keyboard and bowed string instruments, but also a large number of citterns (nineteen in all, by far the most depicted instrument), but only three lutes. And then there are seven plucked string instruments that are difficult to identify, but which seem to be a cross between a lute and a cittern (Plate 8). They share with the lute the overall size and shape, the width of the neck, the sharp angle of the peg box and the fact that they are played without plectrum – the instrument would have been strung with gut strings. But then there is the obvious cittern-like length of the neck and the metal frets of unequal width that are so typical of the cittern. Whether the back is concave as in a lute, or flat as in a cittern, cannot be seen in the painting. The external characteristics of the instruments have led the authors to conclude that De Hoogh did not, as he frequently did, paint the same instrument over and over again. They are by no means identical: in one painting we see that the strings are fixed to the corpus behind the bridge, as in a cittern, while in other paintings the strings seem to be attached to the bridge like in a lute. Their frequent appearance, however, led Grijp and Hamoen to conclude that this mysterious instrument, which they eventually decided to call the ‘Hooghluit’, must have been fairly popular for a while.

The problem is that this curious instrument is not found in any museum, treatise, or iconographical collection. However, it may be listed in archives. Gerrit Menslage’s inventory, mentioned above, describes in some detail several different types of lutes; the person who drew it up was obviously familiar with the subject matter. The list mentions, apart from a series of lutes in different shapes and sizes, some less common instruments such as an *angelica*, four *bandoras*, a *mandora*, five *katarns* (guitars, perhaps?), and also two *luijthcijthers*. The description neatly fits the appearance of the ‘Hooghluit’, and moreover they are encountered in exactly the right time and place: Amsterdam, 1670. It is likely that the lutes depicted by De Hoogh were in fact in regular use for a while, in any case in Amsterdam around 1670, and that they were called by the apt name of lute cittern.

## Guitar

The guitar was already a well-known instrument in the 16th century and music for it was published in France, Spain and the Southern Netherlands. In terms of stringing, tuning, repertoire and the way it was played, the guitar was related to the lute, and just like the lute the guitar was built in different sizes. The 16th-century guitar had four string courses, but in the early 17th century a fifth course was added. Over time different tunings were developed, as well as a special tablature notation for adequately writing down guitar music. In the 17th and 18th centuries, the guitar gradually assumed the place of the lute as the most popular plucked instrument in the upper circles. The reason would have been that the guitar was easier to play than the lute and was less vulnerable. The rise of the guitar would also have benefited from the fact that King Louis XIV of France, the Sun King himself, preferred the guitar to the lute.

In the Dutch Republic, too, the ‘Spanish guitar’, as it was called there, found acceptance. Even Constantijn Huygens, who originally spoke disdainfully of the ‘bastard lute’, finally gave in



German lute tablature, from Hans Neusidler, *Ein Newgeordent Künstlich Lautenbuch* (Nuremberg 1536), f. k4<sup>v</sup>

and started to play the instrument and to compose for it. In 1673 he wrote to his friend Utricia Ogle that he had become an accomplished guitar player in the previous year, and that he had already written more than 30 pieces in all modes and keys 'for this miserable instrument'. Guitars also appear in paintings of the period, but not as frequently as lutes. A famous example is the guitar player by Johannes Vermeer (c.1670-1672) (Plate 9).

Dutch instrument makers also built guitars. In 1635, after the death of the widow of Hendrik Peerboom, an instrument maker who had worked in The Hague, an inventory of her goods and chattel was drawn up, and it included instruments built by her husband; among them was a *guytaerne*. Later, another guitar maker worked in The Hague, Jean (de) la Grange by name. In 1681 the musician and instrument maker Philip Rosseter claimed from 'monsieur La Grange, *ghiteer-maker*', more than f. 219 for repairing guitars, refreshments, borrowed money and other things. Obviously he was engaged by La Grange to mend guitars for him. One wonders why La Grange did not repair them himself, given that he was a guitar builder.

In Amsterdam, we also hear of a guitar and even of a professional guitarist. In 1669 there was mention of Jeronimus Reijnwalt (Rijnwalt), a musician in that city, who was going to give one Simon van der Stel guitar lessons. The latter had bought, for the substantial sum of f. 20, 'a certain Spanish instrument with strings, named a *getarre*' from Grietje Boudewijns, widow of Gerrit Menslage, the instrument maker we met earlier, who had continued the business together with the apprentice Arent Roelofszoon from Münster. Payment of that sum in gold coins had taken place in the presence of Reijnwalt. By order of Van der Stel, the instrument had been de-





French lute tablature, from Joachim van den Hove, *Florida* (Utrecht 1601), f. 110r.

For a transcription of the piece, see below, p. 122

livered by Grietje's servant girl to St Annendwarsstraat, behind the *Oude Kerk* [Old Church], in the house of the button maker where Reijnwalt was staying. It is remarkable that the guitar as a phenomenon was apparently fairly unknown, as suggested by the description of it in the notarial deed. The guitarist Reijnwalt, even though he did not yet have a house of his own in 1669, stayed in Amsterdam; in 1670 he still owed Grietje, who had since died, the sum of f. 10:8. In 1672, he was buried in the St Anthonis churchyard from a house in Jodenbreestraat.

### *The notation of lute music*

Finally we need to devote a word or two to the way lute music was notated. Shortly before 1500, the need arose to write down specific instrumental music. For polyphonic instruments such as the organ, lute and harp, special notations or tablatures were developed. Each instrument had its own tablature, adapted to the instrument's specific characteristics. The tablature for the lute was a fingering notation in which the symbols do not represent the notes, but the place where a finger of the left hand should press down a string on the fingerboard. Different systems of lute tablature were developed more or less simultaneously because in the various countries where the lute was played, people came up independently with their own ideas. Tradition has it that Conrad Paumann, a blind organist from Germany, devised a tablature in which the notes that are played on the lute are shown as letters, while the rhythm is indicated above.

In France, Spain and Italy, lute tablature systems were developed that look superficially

like 'normal' staves. However, the horizontal lines do not indicate the pitch here, but the strings of the lute. There are usually six lines, whereas our 'normal' staff has five. The letters or digits on those six lines show whether an open string should be played there (by the letter *a* or the figure *o*) or whether the string should be pressed down at a certain fret: the letter *b* or the figure *1* for the first fret, *c* or *2* for the second fret and so on. Here again, the rhythm is indicated by the symbols at the top. Italy and Spain used the system with figures (with the difference that in Italy the highest string was represented by the bottom line, and in Spain by the top line), while in France the tablature used letters. The French system was adopted in England and the Netherlands, and towards the end of the 16th century would gradually replace the complicated German system. In the 17th-century Republic only French tablature was used. Apart from the notes to be played, various symbols were used to indicate ornaments or which finger of the right and/or left had to be used.

Systems derived from lute tablature were also used for related instruments, such as cittern and guitar, and in the 17th century also for solo works for the viola da gamba.



## CHAPTER 2

### Prelude: The Lute in the Netherlands before 1600

#### *The rise of the lute in the Middle Ages*

In the Netherlands we first find the lute mentioned in the Middle Ages. The earliest references to the instrument occur in the second half of the 14th century in the accounts of the various princely courts, in which we regularly read that money is withdrawn to pay visiting players or singers who have entertained the lord with their art. The concept of ‘art’ should be taken more widely than became customary later on. In 1396, for instance, we read of *enen man, die opter lute speelde ende een zwaert al spelende voer sijn voorhoofd sette* [a man who played on the lute, and while playing balanced a sword on his forehead]; and in 1375, we hear of two men and a woman who were rewarded by Albrecht of Bavaria, Duke of Hainaut, Holland and Zeeland, for their performance: *speldden mit I cziterne daer die vrouwe vp sanck* [played on the cittern while the woman sang to it], and who also performed an act with a horse and a monkey (*ende spelden mit I perde ende I scemunkel*). This performance took place in Le Quesnoy in Hainaut, and the instrument was not a lute but a *ghiterne*, a related string instrument. Five years later, however, we come across two young men from Bavaria who played on and sang to the *leut* and *ghistierne* for Willem van Oostervant, Albrecht’s son. Here the *ghiterne* and the lute were employed together to accompany singing, and possibly also for instrumental intermezzi. In Willem’s treasurer’s accounts of the same period, there is mention of a certain Argentièrre and a *compagnon qui jua dou leut avoec li et adont mess. Bauduins canta* [a companion who played with her on the lute. Where to Sir Bauduins sang]. Elsewhere we learn that this Bauduins was the court chaplain and secretary to the duke; in other words, an educated clergyman who performed together with a female singer (?) and a lutenist. Another such travelling lute player was the man mentioned in 1389 as *arme priester uut Ierlant* [a poor priest from Ireland], who played on *ene leut*. We also find payments to non-resident lutenists in the accounts of the treasurer of the County of Holland, such as in 1401, where we see a *lutespeelre die mitten glasen speelde ende singen conste als een leeuwewerik* [a lute player

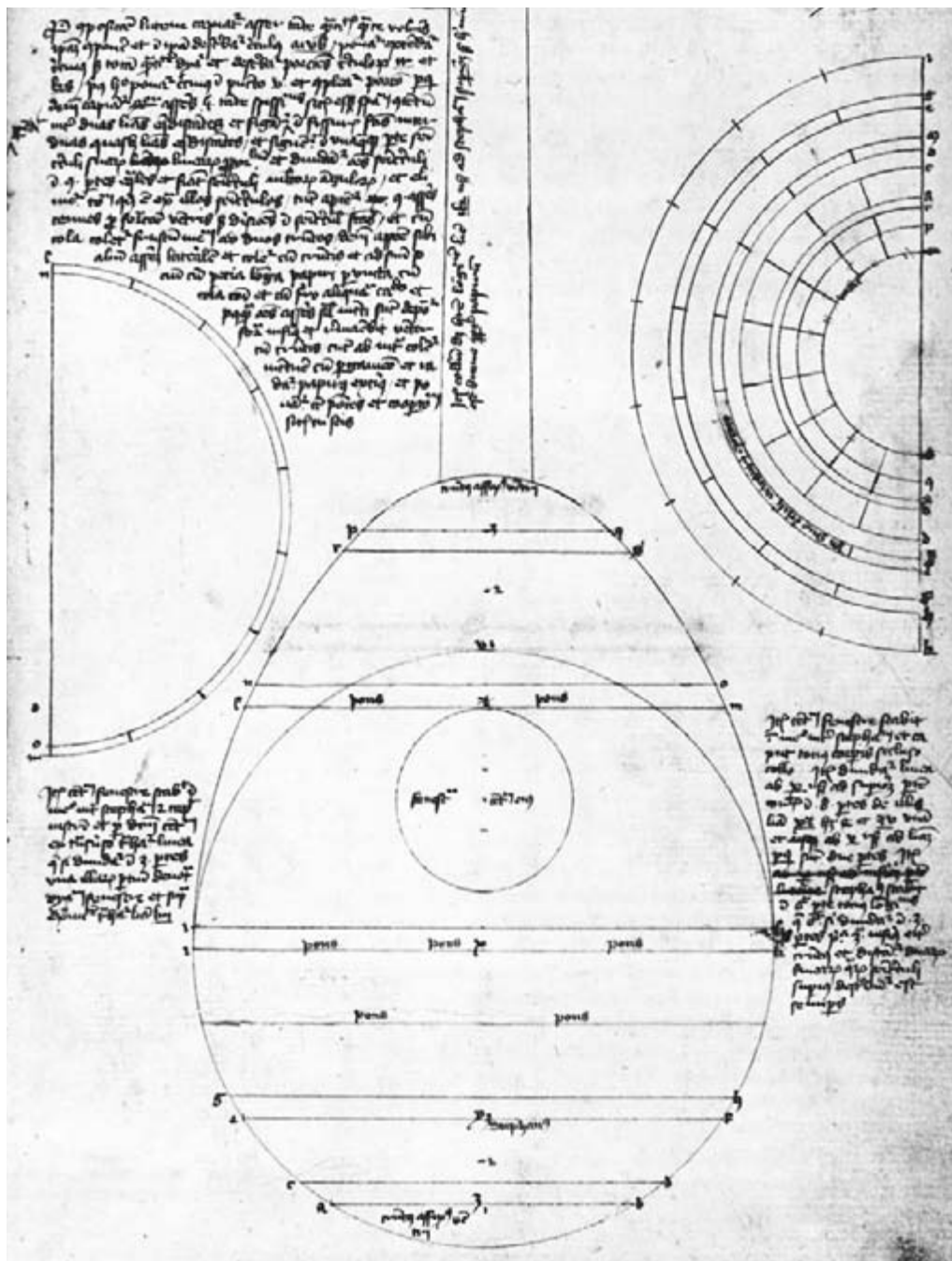
who played with glasses and could sing like a lark], and in 1419 *speelluden die upter luyten speelden* [musicians who played on their lutes] in a procession.

Not only the members of the court chapel and itinerant musicians, but also the noble ladies and gentlemen themselves would have made music, both vocal and instrumental. Again we find proof of this in the court in Holland: in the accounts for 1420/21, the considerable sum of 2 pounds, 11 shillings and 2 pennies was entered as payment for *alrehande saken ende oic van een luyt een clavicord [...] ende een harp die mijn genadige vrouwe gehad hadde* [various things and also for a lute and a clavichord [...] and a harp that my most gracious Lady acquired]. In other words, a lute, a clavichord (a stringed keyboard instrument) and a harp were bought on behalf of the duchess. The lute-playing lady was Elizabeth van Görlitz (1390-1451), married in 1418 to Jan of Bavaria (1374-1425), youngest son of the abovementioned Duke Albrecht of Bavaria. In the short period that Jan held court in The Hague, culture flourished: there was a strong literary tradition, and for a while the famous painter Jan van Eyck worked there. Music, too, had people's interest. We even hear the name of a lutenist; in April 1418 one *Heyn mitter luit* received 4 pounds for a saddle for the horse he had been given by the duke. Perhaps this is the same person as the *meyster Heynric* who is mentioned in 1403 as a Utrecht city piper who also played the lute. In this period we more regularly find lutenists in the towns and cities. According to the Leiden municipal accounts of 1426, money was paid to cover the drinks that had been served to lutenists, possibly visiting lute players.

It is mere coincidence that the first instrument builder's drawing of a lute was made by a man from the Northern Netherlands, namely Hendrik Arnoudszoon of Zwolle (c.1400-1466). Hendrik's cradle stood on the shores of the River IJssel, but he spent his working life as a doctor, astrologer and organist at the courts of Duke Philip the Good of Burgundy and the French King Louis IX. While in Burgundy, he wrote a treatise on musical instruments in which he also described the lute.

Hardly any research has been carried out in the archives of the Northern Netherlands with regard to the lute, but we do see the instrument in prints and pictures of the period. A good example is the famous engraving *The Musicians* by Lucas van Leyden (1524), showing a rather impoverished man and woman playing the lute and the fiddle.

Thus also in the Netherlands, the lute had become part of the musical culture. Unlike in Italy, France and the German countries, however, in the 16th-century Netherlands there were no prominent composers for the lute whose work was published or circulated in manuscript form. Information about lute players and the music they played or possibly composed has to be gleaned from other sources. There are strong indications that in this period, the lute culture was more developed in the Southern Netherlands than in the north. One indication is music printing: the southern provinces are notable for the large number of music books for the lute and related instruments, such as the cittern and the guitar.



Hendrik Arnoudszoon of Zwolle, Description of the lute in his treatise on musical instruments, c.1440.

Paris, Bibliothèque nationale, Ms. Lat. 7295, f. 132





Lucas van Leyden, *The Musicians*. Engraving, 1524



### *The lute publications of Phalèse*

In 1545, Pierre Phalèse (Petrus Phalesius) set up a music shop and publisher's business in the university town of Louvain. When he died in 1578, his catalogue mentioned a considerable number of music book titles – 189 in all – that had been printed on his own presses since 1553. In 1570 he had expanded commercially by teaming up with the Antwerp publisher Jean Bellère, with whom he was to publish the majority of his music books. In 1581 Phalèse's successor, Pierre Phalèse Jr, moved the Louvain publishing house to Antwerp.

A large part of Phalèse's musical publisher's list consisted of music books for plucked instruments; there was obviously a good market for them. In his first year, 1545, he published a book of lute music, *Des chansons reduictz en tablature de Lut*, and many lute books were to follow in later decades; as far as we know, the firm published as many as 22 lute books before 1578. These were in fact only thirteen different works: a number of them were also published in French and Latin, and much of the music was later reprinted, sometimes entirely, sometimes partly, and sometimes under different titles. The company published nearly a thousand lute pieces in total: around 600 intabulations, 200 dances and 140 fantasias and preludes. This production puts 16th-century Louvain in third place as to lute editions; only in Venice and Paris were more lute books published.

The fact that Phalèse also published his lute books in French and Latin proves that he aimed not only, or maybe not even primarily, at the local market of the Southern Netherlands,



Title page of *Des chansons reduictz en Tablature de Luc*, Louvain: Pierre Phalèse, 1546

but that his books were intended for an international public. Students in Louvain, who came from all over Europe, would have been a specific target group. That his books circulated widely, also in the Protestant north, is illustrated by the fact that the Thysius Lute Book, which we will discuss in detail later, contains copied pieces from Phalèse's *Theatrum musicum* (1563, 1571) and *Luculentum theatrum musicum* (1568). A striking feature of Phalèse's lute books is that a number of them start with instructions for playing the instrument. These are in Latin or in French, in agreement with the language on the title page.

Phalèse's lute editions are often fairly bulky. The lay-out is usually standard: a few fantasias are followed by dozens of intabulations of French songs – after 1568, also of Italian madrigals – as well as a small number of Latin motets, and the books usually end with a large selection of dances. Most lute books produced elsewhere carried the name of a well-known musician; the buyer then knew more or less what kind of music to expect. Phalèse's editions, however, are all anonymous, except for incidental compositions that bear the name of the composer. The only exception is the third volume of *Des chansons & Motetz reduicttz en tabulature de Luc*, published in 1547, the content of which is ascribed to the otherwise unknown master from Padua Pierre di Teghi; a lute book published in 1575 under the name of Raphael Viola, possibly also an Italian, is lost. On closer inspection, we see that Phalèse's anonymously published editions are in many cases taken from foreign publications by Italian, French and German lutenists. Phalèse's editions contributed significantly to spreading the work of these masters in the Netherlands and internationally. When copying pieces from foreign editions, those from Italy and Germany had to be transcribed from the local tablature to the French. At the typesetting stage, quite a lot went wrong; the music pages sometimes bristle with errors. This suggests that not a professional lutenist, but Phalèse himself is the author of the music editions.

However, by no means all of Phalèse's productions have such counterparts in other countries. A number of pieces are probably by local composers, perhaps a Louvain lutenist or another accomplished lute player in the Netherlands. It is difficult to assess, though, which of the pieces are 'native'. The only way of tracing pieces of local origin is by looking at the title: a title in Dutch is likely to be a sign that we are dealing with a composition from the Dutch-speaking area. On the other hand, pieces of unknown provenance could well be Dutch compositions: the French chansons were well-loved in the Netherlands and could be intabulated there; with dances whose titles may be just *Almande* or *Passemezo*, we are quite at a loss as to their origin.

It is regrettable that the pieces with Dutch titles in Phalèse's books do not give the name of a composer. Not that there are very many; only a handful in each book. Most (eight in all) are found in *Theatrum musicum* (1563), but that is still a small proportion of a total of 142 pieces. These Dutch pieces are settings of folk tunes, often with love – required or unrequired – as their subject. We find titles such as *Die lustelycke Mey*, *Miins liefkens bruyn oogen*, *verjubleert ghij Venus dierkens* and *Ghepeis ghij doet mij trueren* [The lusty May, My darling's brown eyes, Rejoice you creatures of Venus, and Pondering brings me sorrow]. The only religious song that turns up in several books is *Godt es mijn licht* [God is my light]. After *Theatrum musicum*, the local repertoire is abandoned: in the lute books Phalèse published afterwards under his own name, there is either



'Die lustelycke Mey' in *Des chansons reduictz en Tabulature de Lut*, Louvain 1545, p. 17

no composition with a Dutch title, or only the abovementioned *Godt es mijn licht*. Apparently the company was becoming more and more internationally oriented, as suggested by the many Italian titles in books of the period.

In 1563, Phalèse started to bring out a series for solo cittern. This differs from the lute books in that the first cittern volumes are not anonymous, but carry the name of Sebastian Vreedman (three volumes) and Frederic Viaera Friso (one volume). Nothing is known about the latter, save that he was apparently from Friesland, to judge by his surname, although his first name does not sound particularly Frisian. The other composer, Sebastian Vreedman, possibly came from the same province; at least if the assumption is correct that he was the brother of the architect, painter and engineer Hans Vredeman de Vries (1526-1609), who was born in Leeuwarden. In any case, Sebastian lived as an organist in Mechlin from the early 1550s to around 1580. He later emerged in Leiden, where he re-pinned the musical drum of the town hall carillon; later, he earned a living as a cittern builder. He must have died around 1600.

Vreedman's cittern publications were also intended for an international market, to judge by their Latin titles, but the share of Dutch music in them is far greater than that in Phalèse's lute publications. In Vreedman's *Nova longeque elegantissima cithara ludenda carmina* (1568), 28 of the 87 pieces have a Dutch title; the music is preceded by instructions in Latin for playing the cittern.

### *The lute in Antwerp*

When Phalèse's firm moved to Antwerp, it not only settled in the most important trade centre in the Netherlands, but also in a city in which the lute was flourishing. Lute builders were active there, and so was a generation of promising lute players. We know a great deal about the Antwerp lute culture thanks to the publications by Godelieve Spiessens.

The most important Antwerp lutenist, also the first lutenist in the Netherlands to publish music for his instrument, was Emanuel Adriaenssen (c.1554-1604). He was born in Antwerp and occupied a subordinate position in the civic militia there. He was a professional musician who, together with his brother, opened a music school to teach the lute – illegally, because they were not members of the musicians' guild. This resulted in their being taken to court. In 1584, Adriaenssen published a lute book with Phalèse entitled *Pratum musicum*. It clearly sold well, because a revised reprint was needed in 1600. In 1592, Adriaenssen put a sequel on the market, *Novum pratum musicum*, which included a treatise on music theory and the technique of intabulating polyphonic music for the lute. These volumes are more varied in terms of content than Phalèse's earlier lute books; they contain fantasias and dances for solo lute, adaptations for lute of vocal compositions by Italian, 'Dutch', and French lute composers with the soprano and the bass part printed along with the lute part, and a number of settings for three or four lutes and other instruments. Sometimes even three or four parts of the original polyphonic composition are given as well. Adriaenssen was an active musical entrepreneur, who relied mainly on marketing lute adaptations of existing pieces. Even the fantasias with which his books start, the most prominent pieces, musically speaking, turn out to be partly derived from illustrious predecessors such as Francesco da Milano.

In the second half of the 16th century Antwerp housed quite a number of talented lutenists. When the city had been conquered by Spanish troops, after 1585, most of them spread out over the neighbouring provinces, although Adriaenssen did not. It is likely that the refugees were adherents of the Reformation, whereas Adriaenssen, who probably also had protestant sympathies, returned to the Roman Catholic faith. Perhaps the most important Antwerp lutenist after Adriaenssen was Joachim van den Hove, who moved to Leiden; more about him later.

Another lutenist was Adrian Denss, probably born in Antwerp around 1545, who fled to Cologne around 1583; perhaps the situation in Antwerp had become too dangerous for him because of his Lutheran sympathies. In Cologne he published a lute book entitled *Florilegium omnis fere generis* in 1594. In true Southern Netherlands fashion, familiar since Phalèse en Adriaenssen, the volume contains a combination of lute solos and intabulations of popular songs, usually of Italian but also of German and French origins. These intabulations are accompanied by three or four of the parts of the original composition in ordinary music notation, printed on the page opposite the tablature. The solos, consisting of fantasias and dances, are nearly all anonymous; a few pieces are attributed to Alfonso Ferrabosco, Victor de Montbuisson and Gregorius Huet. It is possible that the intabulations and anonymous solo pieces are by Denss himself. He probably died in Cologne some time between 1596 and 1608.



Title page of Emanuel Adriaenssen, *Novum pratum musicum*, Antwerp 1592

Gregorius Huet, who is mentioned in Deniss's book, was artistically speaking one of the most important Antwerp lutenists. In the various sources, Huet's name is spelt in many different ways: Howet, Howett, Huewet, or Huwet. He was the son of Gregorius Huet, born in Louvain and also a *luytslager*, a lutenist, who became a citizen of Antwerp in 1560 and died before 1582. The younger Gregorius followed in his father's footsteps professionally, and in 1590 set off for Wolffenbüttel, where he was appointed at the local princely court in 1591. This is where he met John Dowland; in 1595 the two men travelled to Kassel together to play for the famed Maurits, Landgrave of Hessen, himself a great music lover. The prince praised Huet's playing and particularly his skill at intabulating. In a contemporary document, Huet is connected to a technical improvement in lute playing: he is supposed to have invented the 'thumb outside' technique for the right hand (see below p. 141). After 1614, when he was no longer needed at court as a lutenist, he stayed on as one of the musicians in Michael Praetorius' orchestra. He probably died in 1616. Unlike his fellow Antwerp lutenists, he did not publish any lute music, so we only know fragments of Huet's compositions from other books and manuscripts, and these are only small in number.

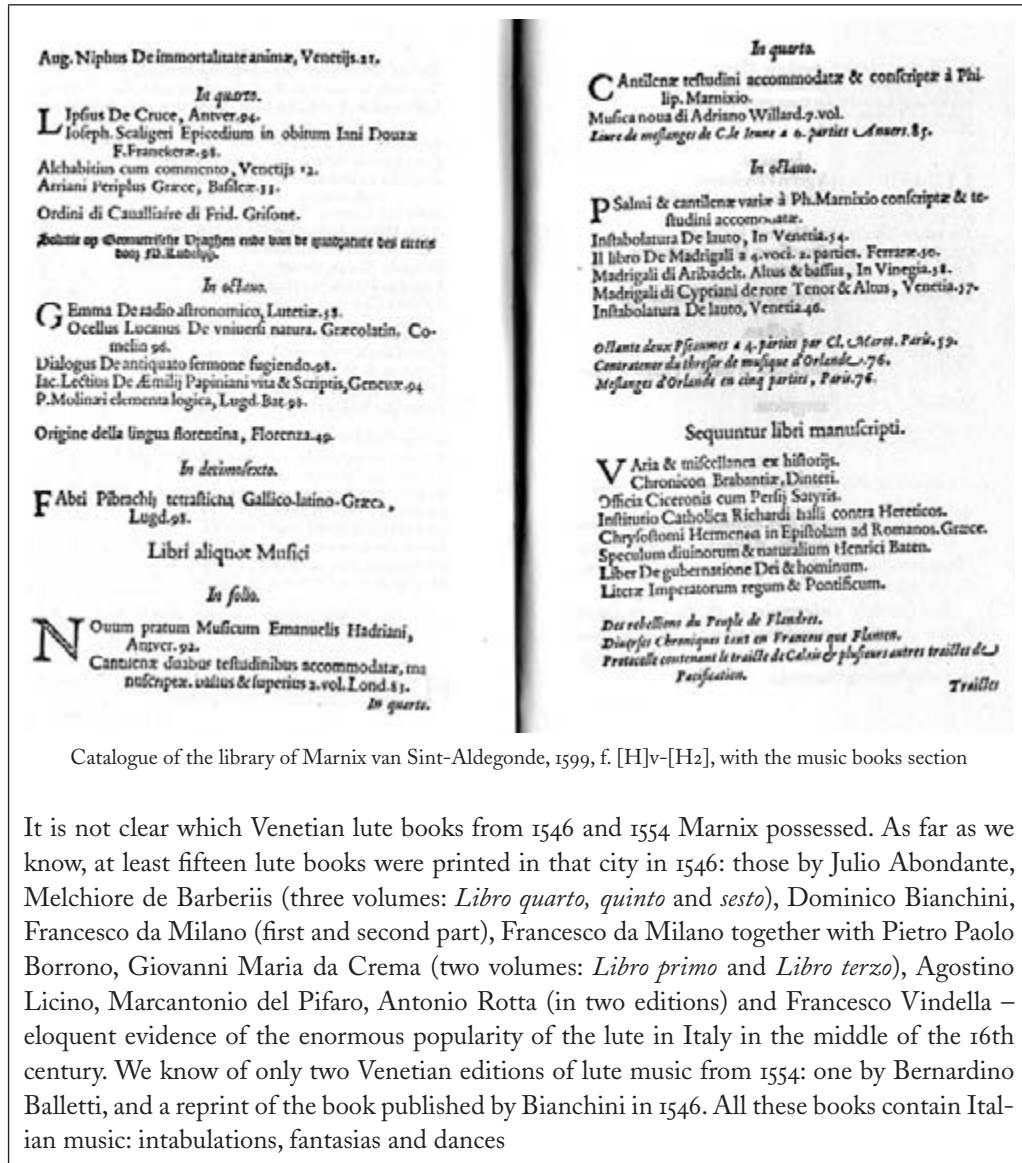
Another name from the Southern Netherlands that should be mentioned in connection with the lute is that of the famous writer, scholar and diplomat, Filips Marnix van Sint-Aldegonde (1540–1598). He was an associate of William of Orange, also known as William the Silent, leader of the Revolt against the Spanish. Nowadays Marnix's fame rests on the supposition that he wrote the text of what is now the Dutch national anthem, the *Wilhelmus*; however, his authorship is anything but undisputed.

When he died in Leiden in 1598, Marnix left a library of 1,600 titles, which in those days was a very large collection for a private person. In 1599, the books were sold at the house of his widow, and a catalogue was published for the occasion: the first known printed auction catalogue. It shows that Marnix was interested not only in theology, politics and history, but also in music. The final mention in the catalogue is that of fourteen music books, mostly printed volumes of vocal music: madrigals and psalms by Claude le Jeune, Adriaen Willaert, Orlande de Lassus, Jacques Arcadelt and Cipriano de Rore. But there is also the respectable number of five books of lute music on the list. Two of them were older Venetian editions, from 1546 and 1554, with Italian compositions, and Adriaenssen's *Novum pratum musicum* from 1592. More interesting are the three manuscripts mentioned: one manuscript in two parts, apparently written in London in 1583, with intabulations of vocal music for two lutes (Bassus and Superius), and two books with psalms and various songs ('cantilenae') set for lute and copied by Marnix himself. So he not only played the lute, he also intabulated sacred and secular songs for the instrument. That aspect of his artistry has remained underexposed so far.



Hendrik Bary, *Portrait of Philips Marnix van Sint-Aldegonde*. Engraving, 1671





Catalogue of the library of Marnix van Sint-Aldegonde, 1599, f. [H]v-[H]2, with the music books section

It is not clear which Venetian lute books from 1546 and 1554 Marnix possessed. As far as we know, at least fifteen lute books were printed in that city in 1546: those by Julio Abondante, Melchior de Barberis (three volumes: *Libro quarto*, *quinto* and *sesto*), Dominico Bianchini, Francesco da Milano (first and second part), Francesco da Milano together with Pietro Paolo Borrono, Giovanni Maria da Crema (two volumes: *Libro primo* and *Libro terzo*), Agostino Licino, Marcantonio del Pifaro, Antonio Rotta (in two editions) and Francesco Vindella – eloquent evidence of the enormous popularity of the lute in Italy in the middle of the 16th century. We know of only two Venetian editions of lute music from 1554: one by Bernardino Balletti, and a reprint of the book published by Bianchini in 1546. All these books contain Italian music: intabulations, fantasias and dances

### *Lutenists in the Northern Netherlands before 1600*

Let us turn again to the Northern Netherlands where, in the last quarter of the 16th century, the Dutch Republic emerged as a result of the Revolt against Spain. Although we do not have a great deal of evidence, it appears that there, too, the lute had by then found a solid niche for

itself in the cultural life of the citizens. It is for instance known that the famous scholar and artist Dirck Volckertszoon Coornhert (1522–1590) played the lute. There was, however, no flourishing publishing tradition comparable with that in the south.

We have to wait until the middle of the 16th century before we come across data about professional lute players. The earliest mention is to be found in Leiden, thanks to archival research by Jack Scholten. The first player to turn up, in 1537, is Jacob Gerritszoon, who is consistently described in the sources as a *luytspeelder* [lute player]. He first lived in Boomgaardsteeg, and in 1545, when he had already moved to Koepoortgracht, he married Aefgen Reyersdochter, a draper's widow. Jacob himself also became a cloth merchant, because from then on he is referred to as a draper as well as a lutenist. After his wife's death, in around 1556, he married Catharina Meesdochter, another draper's widow, and he moved to Mareldorp (now called Haarlemmerstraat), and later on to the stately Breestraat. During the Spanish Siege of Leiden, the couple lived in a house on Koepoortgracht, together with seven other people. It had previously belonged to Catharina's brother, who had fled to Utrecht. Jacob died shortly after the Relief of Leiden on 3 October 1574. From this lutenist-cum-draper, not a note of music has remained.

Another Leiden lutenist who played an important role during the Siege of Leiden was Willem Corneliszoon (c.1540–1616), whose carrier pigeons acted as messengers between the besieged citizens and the Prince of Orange's army. By means of these birds, contact with the outside world was maintained, and in 1578 the grateful Town Council of Leiden granted Willem the right to call himself 'van Duivenbode' [Pigeon Postman] and to have an appropriate family coat of arms showing a couple of keys (being the symbol of Leiden) and a number of pigeons. It can still be admired on the house where he lived (Plate 10). When the patriotic pigeons had died, in 1586, Willem presented them to the Town Council to be stuffed. It seems they were indeed kept at the town hall for a while.

As with Jacob Gerritszoon, we know one or two things about Willem's life, but nothing has been handed down about the music he played. Yet we do know a few details about his musical activities. Willem was the son of the carpenter and town beadle, Cornelis Janszoon, and his wife, Clara Ulrichsdochter van der Wartel. There were nine children in the family, and three of them are known to have been musicians: Jan became a violinist, Ulrich a harpist and Willem a lutenist. In 1560, Ulrich and Willem were both taken on as town players, together with Floris Schuyt and Jan Jacobszoon de Leeu. The contract of their appointment sets out their duties in detail: they had to play on Christian holy days, at annual fairs, and three times at the town hall every weekend. They also performed when high-ranking visitors were received. Later, the composition of the group changed. Jan Jacobszoon de Leeu was replaced by Jan Corneliszoon, and sometimes other musicians played along. One Jacob Steenhardt is mentioned, also a lute player, possibly the same master Jacob who performed again in 1610 when the town fathers received the Venetian Ambassador with a welcome banquet. Willem Corneliszoon and *zijn consorten* [his companions] also formed an accompanying ensemble for the Leiden chamber of rhetoric 'Liefde es tfondament' [Love is the foundation]. In May 1578, for instance, Willem and Jan provided the music for a chariot on which a comedy was acted, while on 14 January the three brothers played in the

Doelen with people from the chamber of rhetoric, during the reception of Sir Robert Dudley, Earl of Leicester.

Willem was a well-to-do citizen. He lived on Rapenburg (now number 94), and owned several nearby dwellings, one of which (Rapenburg 96) he sold to the lute builder Andries Asseling in 1602. He died on 8 November 1616, and was buried in the *Pieterskerk* [St Peter's Church] two days later. No lutes are mentioned in the inventory of his estate, but some flutes do figure, a bow with silver mounting, a psalm- and songbook and other old music books. It is possible that he played on the flute as a city player and at open-air stage performances. Willem was married to Anna Abrahamsdochter van Leeuwen, but the couple had no children.

The fact that Willem Corneliszoon van Duivenbode was regularly asked to play at official functions is an indication of his musical qualities. He was obviously able to support himself by being a musician and a lute player, since there is no mention of him in any other capacity. In the university town, which rapidly recovered after the disastrous siege of 1573–74, there was enough demand for music. Especially at the end of the 16th century, there was much activity in the world of lute playing, and we shall meet many other names of lutenists. We will see that at the beginning of the 17th century, the lute in Leiden rose to great heights, and that other towns in the Republic did not lag behind.

## CHAPTER 3

### Music in the Dutch Republic

#### *The Republic of the Seven United Provinces*

It helps to realise that the Dutch Golden Age, that period of political, economic and cultural blossoming in what is now called the Netherlands, roughly coincided with a war that dragged on for 80 years. In 1572, the towns in the provinces of Holland and Zeeland started an armed uprising against the lawful ruler, King Philip II of Spain, who had inherited the Burgundian Netherlands from his father, Charles V. The displeasure with the taxation Philip imposed, in particular, and the strict, inflexible attitude of the deeply devout Roman-Catholic King towards Protestant sympathisers with the faith of the Reformation, resulted in a revolt led by William of Orange, a high-ranking nobleman and politician. Initially the rebels did not stand a chance against the Spanish army, which consisted largely of mercenaries from surrounding countries. One Dutch town after another was conquered, but the military reversal of fortune began with the failure of the sieges of Alkmaar and Leiden in 1573-1574. From then on, the war would be fought mainly in the south and east of the Netherlands.

An important event was the capture of Antwerp by the Spanish in 1585. When the rebels closed off the waterway to the city, Antwerp's role as the largest port of the Netherlands came to an end, and Amsterdam took over as the main trading centre. On top of that, around 40,000 people, mainly Calvinists, left Antwerp, which was from then onward strictly Roman-Catholic again. Many of them moved to the liberated north, where they provided important economic and cultural stimuli. In 1581 the insurgent provinces deposed Philip II as sovereign, and Dutch independence became a fact. The war efforts of subsequent years delineated the frontiers of the liberated provinces. They forged a political union based on self-rule without a king; the Republic of the Seven United Provinces was born. Not until 1648, at the Peace of Münster, did Spain recognise the young Republic and did the war come to an end. The Southern Netherlands remained under Spanish rule, later that of the Austrian Habsburg dynasty.

The Revolt against Spain has often been represented as a united struggle against a foreign ruler, but that picture is anything but correct. In fact, the war caused great discord in the Netherlands. In the first stages the struggle had all the symptoms of a civil war, because the Roman-Catholics especially – then still the majority of the population – either took a hesitant stance towards Spanish rule or actively supported it. When the new political and military situation had stabilised, at the time of the Twelve Years' Truce (1609–1621), and the Catholics had had their political and religious rights taken away from them, a conflict flared up within the Calvinist social and administrative elite. Originally it concerned a theological matter. The Remonstrants were adherents of a less dogmatic theology, and in the fundamental question of the relationship between divine grace and man's free will, they advocated a rather large role for man's own responsibility in acquiring eternal salvation; whereas their opponents, the Counter-Remonstrants, would hear nothing of it. This had a parallel in different political opinions: the Remonstrants had a tolerant attitude towards dissenters, and were for the separation of Church and State and an ending of the war; while the Counter-Remonstrants believed that the State should serve the faith and should ban other religions from society, and that the war against Catholic Spain was to be continued. The situation became explosive when the Stadholder, Prince Maurits of Orange, and his followers joined the camp of the Counter-Remonstrants, while their political opponents, found mainly among the urban commercial and administrative elite, chose the side of the Remonstrants under the leadership of Johan van Oldenbarneveltdt, Advocate of Holland. The Republic was deeply divided, both politically and religiously, and after the Counter-Remonstrants were victorious in 1618 – which led to the public execution of Van Oldenbarneveltdt – this polarisation would continue to keep the country in its grip for the whole of the 17th century.

In spite of these internal and international troubles, the Dutch Republic went through an unprecedented economic and cultural boom, especially in the first half of the 17th century. The highly urbanised western provinces, particularly Holland and Zeeland, took the lead. Ships from these provinces sailed the oceans of the world and held a large market share of the international trade, while Amsterdam grew into a prominent commercial and financial centre. As happens so often, the increase in wealth went hand in hand with a cultural upswing. Literature flourished, particularly poetry and plays. Famous names such as Constantijn Huygens, Pieter Corneliszoon Hooft, Joost van den Vondel and Jacob Cats were only the top few of a multitude of talented writers. In addition, mainly because of the city's relatively tolerant spiritual climate, Amsterdam became the centre where international literature rolled off the presses. The most conspicuous aspect of culture in the Republic was painting, of course, in which a number of top talents and a large number of hardly less gifted artists produced a volume of prints and paintings that were qualitatively and quantitatively of the highest order. Unlike in the case of literature and music, Dutch painters won international recognition and an appreciation that has lasted to this very day.

In spite of the thriving art of printing in the Dutch Republic, the production of printed music lagged behind for a long time. Music printing using typographical procedures was invented in Venice shortly after 1500; in 1501 Ottaviano dei Petrucci published his *Harmonice musices*

After 1626, the year in which Valerius' *Nederlandsche Gedenck-clanc* appeared, lute music printing came to a halt in the Netherlands. This was not true for music printing as a whole, although that only began to gain momentum around the middle of the 17th century. The industry was concentrated in Amsterdam, where printers such as Paulus Mattyszoon, Broer Janszoon and Cornelis de Leeuw launched a relatively steady stream of music books. The published volumes of vocal and instrumental music were aimed at an audience of amateur musicians playing in a group or family setting. The repertoire could be sacred, for instance psalm and hymn settings, or secular, such as the popular instrumental music of 't *Uytnemend Kabinet* and the recorder music of Jacob van Eyck. After 1660, there was a lull in the Amsterdam music printing business, which only revived in the 1680s and 1690s when a number of musicians, mostly with French backgrounds, turned to publishing music, mostly French. In 1696 the Huguenot Estienne Roger, who had fled to Amsterdam from France, set up a music publishing house here which was soon to become authoritative in the field. With his arrival, the attention of the Dutch music publishing business, which had been oriented towards local and neighbouring markets – the Republic, the Southern Netherlands, England, Scandinavia and the Rhine and coastal areas in Germany – turned to the international arena.



Cornelis Schuyt, *Il primo libro de madrigali a cinque voci* (Leiden, 1600)



*odhecaton* A there, a book with vocal music. It is indicative of the popularity of the lute that some of Petrucci's earliest printed books were devoted to that instrument. In the course of the 16th century, there was a boom in music publishing, especially in Italy but later also in Spain, France, southern Germany and the Southern Netherlands.

In the Dutch Republic music printing only started, as far as we know, in 1600 with *Il primo libro de madrigali a cinque voci* by the Leiden organist Cornelis Schuyt. The book was published by Christoffel van Ravelingen, administrator of the Leiden branch of Plantin's publishing and printing house. In the following decades several music books were printed, especially in Amsterdam, Haarlem and Utrecht, but according to Rudolf Rasch, we have to regard these as isolated attempts. So it is all the more remarkable that in the second decade of the 17th century, a small series of lute books appeared. These were publications by the lutenists Joachim van den Hove and Nicolaes Vallet, but Dutch lute printing was clearly so highly regarded abroad that even a German like Laelius had one of his works printed here (see p. 140). Equally remarkable is the fact that in 1601, only one year after the first Leiden music book appeared, a work entirely devoted to lute music rolled off the presses in Utrecht: Van den Hove's *Florida*.

### *Musical life in the 17th century*

It may be obvious that music, too, played an important role in the cultural life of the Dutch Republic. The musical culture of the Republic was a burgher phenomenon; unlike in other countries, there were no royal courts, noble households or religious institutions that functioned as patrons. There were also no composers of international stature, apart from Jan Pieterszoon Sweelinck. Nevertheless, a large number of musicians, including lutenists, wrote series of fine compositions that attracted international attention. Characteristic of the musical culture of the Republic was its international orientation: the example of Italian, French and English masters was eagerly followed and the songs of those countries were sung. There was also the fact that music-making was so widely practised. In all layers of society, people sang enthusiastically and played musical instruments. The Golden Age was a musical age.

First and foremost, music meant singing, and from the highest to the lowest ranks on the social scale, people sang. The more refined polyphonic singing was reserved for the aristocracy and the upper classes, who were admirers of the French *airs de cour*, songs with lute accompaniment. In the first half of the 17th century such music books were widespread, for instance the sixteen volumes of the *Airs de différents auteurs, mis en tablature de luth* (1608-1643). But the straightforward singing of simple songs must have been second nature to almost everyone; witness the hundreds of songbooks, large and small, that were printed in the 17th and 18th centuries, and which were clearly meant for all layers of the population, to judge by their appearance and circulation. The old saying that goes back to Tacitus – *Frisia non cantat* [the Dutch don't sing] – certainly does not apply to the Golden Age. In the Dutch Republic, songs were a genre that cut through all the segments of musical life: amateurs and professional singers used song to express themselves, sometimes in a religious context, at political events, or to criticise social iniquities,

and so forth. The customary procedure was to write new words to existing, generally familiar melodies, especially tunes of French, Italian or English origin. The practical advantage was that people could sing along immediately, without having to invest time in learning new, unfamiliar tunes. The performance of these songs did not require professional musical instruction: everybody could take part. Among the enormous production of songs, there is much to be found of good quality, both in terms of music and of text. While the Dutch contribution may have lagged behind that of other countries in many other musical genres, the art of song in the Netherlands measured up to that of its neighbours.

In the Dutch Republic, music-making was mainly a social activity. When two or more people were together in an informal setting, they would start making music, as we can see in the many Dutch pictures of the period. We shall see that such representations often had a secondary, symbolic meaning, but the fact that they are so omnipresent means that they also mirrored an actual social reality. Just like today, music seems to have been an integrated aspect of nearly all group activities. Musicians were hired for weddings and other festivities, while in cafés and in the street, people were entertained by musicians of all sorts.

In the Golden Age, music was so prominently present that, just like today, people complained about the noise. We find an interesting expression of this in the volume of emblems *Nieuwen Jeucht Spiegel* [New Mirror for the Young] (1617), in which the phenomenon serenade is made fun of. When a man wished to court a lady, he would often use music to do so, and the best way was to hire a professional music ensemble; we shall see later on how the lutenist Nicolaes Vallet offered aubades as part of his professional musician's package. The engraving in *Nieuwen Jeucht Spiegel* shows what is probably a lifelike representation of such a spectacle (including the musicians' extravagant clothes and masks): we see how a



*Nieuwen Jeucht Spiegel* (Arnhem 1617), p. 64

lutenist, a violinist/fiddler, a stringed bass player and even a virginal, a rectangular cousin of the harpsichord, were assembled, all for the entertainment of the attentively listening woman in the window. The accompanying poem, however, complains of the habit of making music, particularly at night and in disguise, thereby annoying good citizens and disturbing their sleep.

'tMisbruyck van Nacht oft Dach, Baert smerte met gheklach.	<i>The abuse of night or day causes sorrow and complaints</i>
Alsmen by Nachte loopt vermomt over de Straten, Ende ontwaect alle Mensch' met ghesangh, en met spel, Alsmen moetwillich doet aen, de Borghers ghequel, 'tSchijnt wel een vreucht te zijn, maer d'eynd' is seer te haten, Al het spel en ghesanck en mach u doch niet baten, Als de Nacht-wacht verneemt u broodroncken opstel, Maer Klippels vallen daer seer dapper op u Vel, Ist dan niet wel ghemomt, als de Huyt is vol gaten? Ey liever! blijft doch tHuys, oft wilt ghy u ghemoet Eerlijck verblyden, gaet ende dyn Snaren doet Klincken binnen de Deur uwer Liefster Vriendinnen. Verborghen sy u vreucht, verborghen sy u minnen, Misbruyct den Nacht ooc niet, zoo blijft uwen naem goet, Ende meucht zoo met lof, u soete Lief ghewinnen.	<i>If you go about at night in disguise and wake everybody up with song and music and so annoy the citizens on purpose it may sound fun but won't end well at all: all your playing and singing won't help you when the nightwatchman hears your boisterous noise. His baton will rapidly land on your body; Is that not a good disguise, a skin full of bruises? Ay, better stay at home and cheer your soul in decent ways and let your strings sound behind your dearest girlfriend's door; May your joy and loving be concealed. If you don't abuse the night, you'll keep your reputation and thus, in honourable way, you may win your sweet love.</i>

*The lute in musical culture*

We have seen how the lute occupied a prominent position in the musical culture of the 16th and 17th centuries. In the Golden Age this is underlined by the fact that the lute is the instrument that figures most frequently in the Dutch pictorial arts. The musicologist Louis Grijp catalogued the musical instruments in more than 500 paintings and came to the conclusion that the lute occurs in nearly a quarter of them, closely followed by the violin; far less frequent are depictions of instruments such as viols, cellos, citterns, recorders, trumpets, and keyboard instruments such as harpsichords or virginals.

A large amount of lute music circulated in the Republic. As this will be discussed at length later on in the book, we can here mention that in the years between 1601 and 1626, eight books appeared which were wholly or partly devoted to lute music; apart from those, two manuscripts with lute music from the third quarter of the 17th century period still exist. It is striking that the quantity of printed and manuscript lute music declined after 1625, whereas the instrument remained popular in paintings. An explanation for the small number of manuscripts may lie in mere chance: in later years, when the lute was no longer played, manuscripts were more likely to get lost. A large collection of handwritten lute music owned by Constantijn Huygens has disappeared altogether. Of printed books too, often only a handful remain, and of some only a single copy exists, even though there must have been a couple of hundred to start with. Elsewhere in Europe, too, the number of printed lute music books declined sharply after 1620. From that time on, most music for solo lute was handed down as manuscripts, at first mainly in France, and later in German-speaking countries.

The lute was not only used as a solo instrument, however. In the 16th century vocal music was printed with the lute as an accompanying instrument, and the practice must have continued in the 17th century. Again, we can deduce this from paintings, where we often see a singer (sometimes male but more often female) who is accompanied by a lute, played by another person or by the singer. After around 1620 such lute accompaniments were often no longer written down (or printed) as a lute tablature, but lutenists would improvise on the basis of the harmonic pattern. They would do so by ear or from memory, the way present-day guitarists are used to thinking in chord sequences when accompanying. Or perhaps they would read from a written-out bass line with symbols indicating the relevant harmonies. The new performance practice in the Baroque period of playing a *basso continuo* on the basis of a figured bass gave chordal instruments such as lutes and harpsichords a completely new role in ensemble playing. Indeed, many Dutch paintings show different combinations of musical instruments playing together, and the lute is often among them. In these instances, the lute would in principle have provided a chordal accompaniment.

Grijp made other interesting observations when he was making an inventory of the paintings he studied. He discovered that men often played bowed string instruments such as the violin and the cello, as well as wind instruments such as recorder, transverse flute and trumpet; the first instruments were associated with dance music, and the others with the music of travelling players and military music, so they were considered indecent for ladies. However, keyboard instruments

(harpsichords, virginals), but also citterns, were usually played by women. A roughly equal proportion of men and women played the 'aristocratic' instruments, lutes and viols. This allows us to conclude that both men and women played the lute in the 17th century.

While the lute may have been a much loved instrument in higher circles, it was also played by ordinary people. In literature we find many examples of folksy types handling a lute. Petrus Baardt for instance, in his *Deugden-Spoor, in de On-Deughden des werelts aff-gebeeldt* [Virtues trail, shown in the vices of the world] (1645), introduces an incompetent lutenist and ditto violinist in a company of layabouts (see p. 181); they obviously represent third-rate travelling players who have to try and eke out a living in the streets and in taverns. Another example occurs in the play *Moortje* by Gerbrandt Adriaenszoon Bredero (1617), which is set in not quite the best of circles, and in which a woman is praised for her skin, free of blemishes and wrinkles, and for other qualities: 'She can write well and prettily, she can also read animatedly aloud, she plays the lute expertly, she sings most sweetly' (*Sy schrijft goet vaerdich schrift, sy kan oock lustich lesen, Sy handelt braaf de Luyt, sy singt heel soet Mussyck*). In Johan Zacharias Baron's *Klucht van Lichthart, en Aers-gat sonder-sorgh* [The Farce of Light-Heart, and Ass-Hole Couldn't-Care-Less] (1653), another play that does not rank among the most sophisticated, one man says to another in peasant dialect: 'Hurry up, man, get me my lute, I must play a tune in honour of the company' (*Gae heen Jongh haeltme Luyt, 'k moet een deuntje ter eeren 't geselschap speelen*). In painting, too, we come across decidedly less aristocratic types with lutes, for instance in a self-portrait by Jan Steen (Plate 11).

### *Music lessons*

In the 17th century, music lessons were considered a standard aspect of the education of the young in upper circles. Music making was expensive: one needed an instrument, the services of a music teacher, sheet music, and sometimes accessories such as strings and a music stand. It was therefore the prerogative of the upper few and would, for that reason, also have been used to accentuate class differences. In the very highest circles, music lessons were a matter of course. We know that Prince Frederik Hendrik, son of William of Orange, had lute lessons from Joachim van den Hove, presumably when he was studying at Leiden University. Van den Hove and his colleague, Nicolaes Vallet, dedicated publications to Frederik Hendrik and his elder brother, Maurits.

Following the good example of the well-to-do, burghers, too, felt that a musical education was almost a prerequisite for a socially successful existence. Lute lessons often formed part of such an education, as we know from the example of Constantijn Huygens, who had viol, lute and harpsichord lessons at a very tender age; we will come back to this later. Singing lessons, too, were part of a musical education; the young Huygens was only two when he learnt to sing along with psalm melodies, and he had a proper singing teacher not long thereafter. Apart from voice training, this man would have taught him to sing parts in polyphonic pieces. The age bracket for regular music lessons was roughly from eight to fifteen. The sources suggest that the music teacher would turn up daily to instruct his pupil.

Musical abilities were of practical advantage in daily social intercourse. They were used to create a good impression and to establish contacts in upper circles, especially when one was young. Constantijn Huygens is a good example of a citizen whose musical qualities as a young man enabled him to gain access to highly-placed persons when he was allowed to play for them on the recommendation of others. He even managed to catch the attention of King James of England that way. In turn, other people were recommended to Huygens with a special mention of their musical abilities. In 1627, Isaac Gruterus sent the otherwise unknown Antonius Martinus to Huygens with a letter containing the following passage:

However, I would like to introduce to you the bearer of this letter [Antonius Martinus], who provides us with transport and who is keen to talk to you in your winter residence. It is a young man who expresses authority in his excellent conduct, and who excels in his skill in the arts if you were to set him a test on the lute (I'm only mentioning it) or the viola da gamba.

Not every instrument, however, was equally suitable for playing in a family setting. The author and diplomat Marnix van Sint-Aldegonde leaves no doubt as to this in his pedagogical treatise 'Ratio instituendae juventutis' [System for educating the young], published in 1615 under the title *De institutione principum ac nobilium puerorum libellus utillimus* [A very useful booklet about the education of royal and noble sons]. He was of the opinion that a youngster of high social standing who had a talent for music should start singing when he was eight, but only if he could be inspired to do so through the gentle persuasion of his teacher and his own capacities, not by force or threats. Instrumental teaching came later:

From the age of twelve onwards, when they learn to touch the strings and especially to play the lute, I think that this study is very apt for a mind that is capable of it, and very suitable for relaxation after work. The trumpet and the flute, however, a young nobleman should avoid.

Marnix himself played the lute, as we have seen.

The lute and the viol in particular were musical instruments played in higher circles, and were generally associated with the aristocracy. The harpsichord, too, was an acceptable instrument, but then for girls; we have remarked that in paintings it is nearly always women who play keyboard instruments. That Constantijn Huygens played the harpsichord was exceptional, and something that resulted from his own interests rather than the musical education his father provided for him. When he had his sons receive harpsichord lessons, he felt he had to defend the decision in his diary:

... I did it not so much that they might entirely master the instrument, something that is more suitable for daughters, but because I wished that they could judge it [a harpsichord]



when necessary and would be able to talk about it knowledgeably; and also so that they would see how the parts in the tablature [here meaning keyboard notation] are written one below the other with ordinary music notes, and to understand it, something they will benefit from when composing music.

Unsuitable for the wealthy amateur, man or woman, were the violin, the cello and similar bowed string instruments, as well as all wind instruments, with the exception of the recorder. These instruments were too closely associated with, respectively, dance music and the music of street players. This was true mainly in the first half of the 17th century; afterwards, opinions on such matters became a great deal more liberal.

### *Students and music*

When young men from the upper classes who had music lessons as children went on to university, everything points to the fact that they continued to make music. The lute was therefore a popular instrument among students. In representations of student life, the instrument is regularly given a prominent role – often because the greatest dangers that might beset a student happened to be Wine, Woman and Song. An amusing example is found in a *liber amicorum* belonging to Heinrich Flück from Cologne (Plate 12). Such a ‘book of friends’ was often started during a man’s student years, and in this case, too, the picture would have dated from the days when Flück studied in Jena, around 1611. The picture shows a down-and-out student: his empty purse is on the table, the stove and the windows are broken, his debts are scrawled on the wall, and the university beadle is writing on the door that the rector expects him at an appointment, while a young lady who has just entered is showing him a baby, presumably the fruit of their relationship. The Bible lies under the table, unread, and in the foreground we see the attributes of a sinful life: a trictrac game, playing cards, a duelling sabre and a lute (also broken).

The important role of the lute in university circles is also reflected in the numerous lute manuscripts that were started during a person’s student years. A well-known example of such a lute book is the famous Thysius Lute Book, which will be discussed in detail later on. In Huygens’ autobiography, written in Latin verse in 1678, we read about his musical activities in his student days in Leiden in 1616–1617:

Thus hurrying on (though I never short-changed the Muses and Apollo when some verses rushed past, or while playing music together in our spare time, or when among friends I touched the string of the beloved lute, or bowed the mellifluous viol with speedy bow, or struck the metal strings of the loud-sounding harpsichord, although the art had long passed its initial stages), [...]

Professional lutenists found benefactors among students and young enthusiasts from wealthy backgrounds. Both Joachim van den Hove and Nicolaes Vallet dedicated compositions to such



Gerard Terborch, *The Music Lesson* (c.1668-1669). Toledo (USA), The Toledo museum of Art

In the years around 1600, collections of lute music by students were a familiar phenomenon. One example is Thysius Lute Book and the books by Christoph Herold and Ernst Schele, which will be dealt with later on. The first entries in these manuscripts were written during their student years at Leiden University. Leiden was then the intellectual centre of the young Dutch Republic. The university – at that time the only one in the country – had been given to the town as a reward for the brave resistance against the Spaniards during the siege of 1573–1574. Students flocked to Leiden, not only from the Republic but also from abroad, especially Germany. In Early Modern Europe students spent their spare time going to taverns, playing handball, fencing, and of course dancing and making music, with the lute as the favoured instrument. In Dutch-Reformed Leiden music-making was not a matter of course. Only after concerted action by students at the Theology Faculty in 1594 were fourteen students allowed to follow music lessons, provided that no music books were brought into the State College (i.e. their student accommodation), and that they ‘abstained from offensive songs, dances and other levities, so that all sins and levities would be avoided and prevented as much as possible’.

Another book of lute music was written by Petrus Fabritius when he was studying theology at the university of Rostock between 1603 and 1608. Fabritius subsequently became a minister in Schleswig, where he added more songs to his collection. His theological vocation did not prevent him from including all kinds of love songs in it. The first half of Fabritius’ lute book consists of song texts, and the second of German and Polish dances, galliards and passamezzos. Such a motley collection, typical of students, is also found in the lute book of Emanuel Wurstisen. This Basle student started his lute book in 1591 and subdivided it into eight sections or ‘books’: preludes, motets, fantasias, madrigals, passemazzos, various dances, hymns, and psalms.

well-to-do young men, single works as well as whole books; those youngsters’ financial contributions were probably an important secondary source of income for them. Later in their lives, most of these young men continued to play the lute, certainly if they were interested in culture; lutes and literature often go hand in hand. Constantijn Huygens is the best-known example of such a lifelong aficionado, but the lute was also played by his friend Jacob van der Burgh, also a man of letters; Van den Hove dedicated a composition to him. There are many more famous people who played the lute; Joost van den Vondel, too, is presumed to have played the instrument from time to time. Later in this book we will look more closely at the relationship between the lute and poetry.

## CHAPTER 4

### Lutenists of the Golden Age, c.1580-1670

#### *Joachim van den Hove*

Joachim van den Hove was one of the Antwerp lutenists who left the city to seek refuge abroad. He finally ended up in the Dutch Republic where, along with Nicolaes Vallet, he became one of the most important lutenists. He published three handsome volumes of lute music: *Florida* in 1601, *Delitiae musicae* in 1612 and *Praeludia testudinis* in 1616. Some of his music has only been preserved in manuscripts.

Joachim van den Hove was born in 1567 in Antwerp, where he was baptised in the main cathedral on 4 July of that year. He was probably spoon-fed music from day one, because his father, Peeter van den Hove, was a highly regarded musician. He had become a burgher of Antwerp in 1563, and the year after he joined the Players' Guild. In the same year 1564 he married Catharina van Vosbergen, with whom he had several children. Peeter's career was quite successful. In 1581 he was appointed as a city player, replacing his deceased brother Cornelis, and he ran a dance school besides. His reputation as a musician must have been considerable, because in 1577 he and his ensemble were summoned to Dordrecht to play at a town council banquet in honour of Prince William of Orange, probably on the occasion of the birth of his daughter, Elizabeth.

When Antwerp was taken by the Spanish in August 1585, Peeter van den Hove was among the first to leave the city, so we may conclude that he was a convinced adherent of the Reformed faith. It is not clear where he went. Eventually he turned up in the Northern Netherlands, since he was living in The Hague in 1600. We know nothing about the rest of his life. Two of his children also lived in the Republic, because in Leiden we come across two of his sons, Joachim and Hercules, in the early 1590s.

Both Joachim and his brother Hercules, two years his junior, were lutenists. They would have learnt the rudiments of music from their father, but, as was the custom in those days, they probably went to another musician for lessons when they were about seven. It is possible that

their teacher was none other than Emanuel Adriaenssen, the most important Antwerp lutenist. The publications by Joachim van den Hove clearly show Adriaenssen's influence.

Hercules is the first of the brothers we find in the Leiden sources, be it not as a lutenist. In November 1592, the bailiff of Leiden demanded that Hercules be punished for misdeeds committed on 27 July of that year. Together with a number of students, he had maliciously damaged the roof of the Mariakerk by throwing a ladder on it, whereupon the young men had gone around the streets with unsheathed rapiers between eleven and one o'clock at night. On St Anthonisbrug they had used rapiers and stones to attack three passers-by, unarmed men and their spouses, so that twice in succession the couples had to knock at the doors of complete strangers and ask for shelter. When they thought it was safe to go home, accompanied by a group of nightwatchmen who happened to be on the scene, they were attacked again by the same youngsters, this time in Vrouwensteeg. One of the citizens got badly hurt in the head as a result of a stone thrown at him. Finally the assistance of the civic guard was needed to put an end to the disorder. Some of the troublemakers were arrested, but Hercules managed to get away. After that, he went on the run, but on 7 January 1593 he was sentenced by default to six weeks in prison on bread and water, and was banned from the town for a period of three years. We do not hear of him again.

Hercules created such a stir with his misdemeanours that several weeks later a musician was simply described as 'Hercules' brother'. This must have been Joachim, and it is the first time he appears in the Leiden sources; on 8 and 9 February 1593 he played, together with Cornelis Schuyt, at the university's annual foundation day celebrations. The fact that he was not referred to by his own name, only his brother's, indicates that he had arrived in Leiden only very shortly before. Van den Hove stayed in Leiden until financial problems forced him to move to The Hague, where he died in 1620.

Not long after his arrival in Leiden, on 15 July 1594, Joachim became engaged to Anna Rodius from Utrecht, daughter of master Frans Rodius, and possibly related to Salomon Rodius (de Roy), who would later publish Van de Hove's first two lute books. We do not know much about Van den Hove's private life. On 29 March 1606, a child of his was buried in the Pieterskerk [St Peter's Church] in Leiden; the child had no name and must therefore have died immediately after birth. When Joachim died, in 1620, there were living children, but they have not been found in the Leiden registers of births and deaths. The only striking detail we know about his private life comes from early March in 1606, when one Rachel Dierman made a statement in the presence of a notary public about the conduct of 'master Joachum Joachums luytslager'. This has to be Joachim van den Hove, because he is quite often referred to in the sources simply as 'master Joachim', and there would not have been two lutenists in Leiden of the same name. On 16 February, Rachel had given birth to a son called Abraham, and she claimed that the illegitimate begetter was master Joachim. Rachel had been a servant girl in the house of Adriaantje Gerritsdochter, otherwise known as 'Adriaentgen int Schaeck', the widow of the engraver Pieter Bast. Joachim had visited Rachel several times in that house, and finally, after having made her drunk with beer and brandy, he had managed to have 'a carnal conversation' with her, for which services he had paid her. A similar conversation had taken place twice after that, without alcohol

but again for payment. The third time he had reassured her that it could not possibly lead to her having a baby. Rachel also stated that Joachim and Adriaantje had withdrawn into a room together on several occasions, each time for about half an hour, but she did not know what had happened there. Rachel Dierman ultimately did well; in 1608 she became engaged to the Leiden lace maker Thomas Janszoon.

The fact that the lutenist Joachim van den Hove, and his brother Hercules before him, moved to Leiden in particular was not so surprising in view of the favourable circumstances there. As musicians they had to earn their money playing at gatherings and parties and giving music lessons to the rich, and since Leiden was a university town there was plenty of opportunity to do that. In the 17th century, Leiden University was the place where the elite of the Dutch Republic received their higher education. Equally important is the fact that students from other Protestant areas in Europe – Germany, Scotland, Scandinavia and Huguenot France – arrived in large numbers, giving the town an international air. That cosmopolitan musical culture was further enhanced by the presence of travelling companies of English actors and musicians who, from 1590 onwards, often began their continental tours in Leiden.

We saw earlier that music played an important role in student life. The lute was the favoured instrument in student circles, to go by the many lute manuscripts by students, some of which originated in Leiden, as we shall see. It is therefore not surprising to hear of other lutenists in Leiden around 1600, such as the abovementioned Willem Corneliszoon and Jacob Steenhardt; we will make the acquaintance of some others later. Apart from them, there were two other illustrious musicians who enriched the Leiden musical scene: Floris and Cornelis Schuyt, father and son. They were in the service of the town council – Cornelis' study in Italy was even paid for by the council – and they played the organ in various churches. Cornelis acquired some international fame through the volumes of madrigals and dances he published. After 1600, other music books appeared that marked the beginning of a flourishing tradition of music printing in the Northern Netherlands. Lutenists, too, were quick to join the trend.

As a musician, Joachim van den Hove initially did well in Leiden. We saw how, when he had only just arrived, he played with Cornelis Schuyt at the university festivities in February 1593. Shortly before that, on 23 January, he had played at a banquet in the inn *De Eenhoorn* on the occasion of the doctorate of Laurentius de Venio. We happen to know this because some time later, at the request of the innkeeper Cornelis Huygenzoon Gael, he made a statement before the notary public that it was not Cornelis who had seriously wounded one Havick Joosten that time.

Later on, too, we hear of performances commissioned by the Leiden magistrate, for instance on 8 May 1610, when Van den Hove, again with Cornelis Schuyt, an Englishman John Jordan and a certain master Jacob (Steenhardt, perhaps?) played at a banquet in honour of the reception of the Venetian Ambassador, Tomaso Contarini. Van den Hove was also asked to play outside Leiden: on 1 December 1608 he played with an ensemble at the annual banquet of the magistrate of The Hague.

Van den Hove would also have earned money by teaching students and children from the



26 Canzoni  
 A te venero il Mirto  
 A te verraso Clori  
 Son grati i vaghi fiori  
 A febo il lauro, a la dea <sup>rima</sup> casta  
 A patade gli oliui  
 Ma lagrime sospir pena, e dolore  
 Desia l'iniquo A More ~  
 In laude del Mag.<sup>co</sup>  
 signor. J. Brouckhuysen  
 il 3. del settembre An.  
 1597:  
 Joachimo van Hove

Inscription by Joachim van den Hove in the *liber amicorum* of Jacob van Broekhoven, 3 September 1597.  
 The Hague, Koninklijke Bibliotheek, 131 E 24, p. 46

upper classes. One of those pupils we know by name: Prince Frederik Hendrik of Nassau had lute lessons from him, probably when he was studying at the university in 1594-97. It is possible that the young Leiden aristocrat Jacob van Broekhoven, in whose *liber amicorum* Van den Hove wrote an inscription in 1597, was also one of his lute pupils. Among Van den Hove's pupils were probably also the German students Christoph Herold from Halle and an as yet unidentified person, possibly Daniel Schele from Hamburg, when they stayed in Leiden (around 1600 and 1614 respectively), because they produced lute manuscripts that include many of Van den Hove's compositions. Another likely lute pupil was the medical student Steven Wijbouts, who had bought a lute for twelve guilders from Andries Asseling in 1613, as Van den Hove attested in 1616. Van den Hove knew about the purchase because at the time he was in contact with Wijbouts on a daily basis.

Some of the compositions by Van den Hove that have come down to us are those with which he took leave of friends who were leaving Leiden in the years 1613-15; they too, were probably lute pupils of his. They were Martin Dalem, Rudolf van Echten and Adam Leenaerts. It is certain that the otherwise unknown Martin Dalem played the lute because Nicolaes Vallet, too, dedicated a composition to him in 1614. Rudolf van Echten (1592-1643) studied in Leiden and later became a prominent member of the Drenthe knighthood. With Adam Leenaerts (1592/3-1625), a philosophy student from Amsterdam who studied in Leiden and later became headmaster of the Latin School in Heusden, Van den Hove had a special connection. He dedicated several works to this 'friend' and 'patron', and it was probably for Leenaerts that he made a handwritten lute book, the Berlin manuscript, which we will discuss later. For him, Leenaerts was clearly a special benefactor.

Van den Hove would have been financially rewarded for such commissions, and also for the dedications of his three printed lute books (and the manuscript just mentioned). His first two works, *Florida* from 1601 and *Delitiae* from 1612, were intended for high noblemen: his former pupil Prince Frederik Hendrik and his older brother Prince Maurits of Nassau, respectively. The latter was the unofficial head of state in the Republic and Vallet, too, would dedicate a lute book to him. Van den Hove's third book, *Praeludia* from 1616, is dedicated to his 'friends of Divine Music', some prominent gentlemen and former university students. A number of them, among whom Jacob van Dijck and François Fagel, were to become well-known figures in the political, social and cultural life of the Dutch Republic.

From his farewell pieces and the dedication and preface of his *Praeludia*, we may deduce that Van den Hove was closely connected with a Leiden group of distinguished burghers, mainly in university circles, with an interest in music and literature. To judge by the Latin in which Van den Hove wrote the introductions to his books, full of references to Classical Antiquity, he seems to have been at home in the academic milieu. He had had a good education himself; that much is obvious. It is possible that it was for these friends that he wrote the madrigals that are now lost; their Italian texts and the inscription in the *liber amicorum*, a poem by Christoforo Castelletti, point to his humanistic interests.

Materially, too, Van den Hove did well in the first part of his career in Leiden. At first

he lived in rented accommodation on Vollersgracht – the present address is 39 Langebrug – but documents show that around 1600 his capital was assessed at about 3,000 guilders, a not insignificant sum. In July 1604 he was even able to buy the house *De vergulde passer* on Pieterskerkhof, which is now number 2. The house was situated in one of the better areas of Leiden, where the upper-middle classes lived, many professors among them. The house cost him f. 2,025, of which he was to pay f. 300 as a down payment and the rest in annual instalments of f. 150. He made money from the house by letting rooms to students, a common practice in those days. He also did this when he was actually still a tenant himself, and went on doing so when he had bought *De vergulde passer*. Between 1600 and 1605, and again in 1610–1611, at least six students from The Hague, Zutphen and France shared his house.

Van den Hove also used his house on Pieterskerkhof as collateral when borrowing money: he received a lump sum that he was to re-pay in fixed annual instalments. In 1612, for instance, he received f. 400 from the governors of the workhouse at Gouda, to be re-paid in annual instalments of f. 25 (of those f. 400, by the way, f. 100 served as the deposit in a lottery, the proceeds of which went to the workhouse). In the same way he borrowed f. 500 from master Bernard Zwaardcroon, headmaster of the Utrecht city school in 1616, to be re-paid in annual sums of f. 31.5. It is fair to assume that Van den Hove was in particular need of these large sums in 1612 and 1616 to finance the publication of his *Delitiae musicae* and *Praeludia testudinis*; as a rule, such books were funded by the author, not by the publisher or the printer. A loan from his father in 1600 would in all likelihood have served to cover the cost of his first lute book, *Florida*, which appeared in 1601.

In the Leiden judicial archives, we come across Joachim van den Hove's name many times in connection with arguments about small debts with shopkeepers and innkeepers; buying on credit was the normal thing to do in those days. That is how we know that in 1602 Van den Hove owed money to a bookseller called Jacob Adriaenszoon, and in 1604 he was indebted to one Annitgen Jansdochter for the considerable sums of f. 28 and f. 12 for a painting and a Bible, respectively. In 1614 the master cabinet-maker David van der Leck stated that he had framed paintings belonging to Van den Hove, among which an 'Aelberduyr', apparently an Albrecht Dürer or a copy of one, and had returned them all to the owner. It is clear that Van den Hove possessed books and costly paintings.

After 1610, Van den Hove's debts seem to have mounted up. Occasionally he was the creditor, for instance in February 1611, when mistress Sophia van Amerongen, by then married to Mathijs Camp in Utrecht, still owed him money (perhaps for lute lessons?). But most of the time, Van den Hove was the debtor. His debts kept increasing, and on 29 April 1616 the bailiff and aldermen of Leiden decided that his goods in the town were to be confiscated.

When the arrest of his possessions in Leiden had been issued, Van den Hove had probably already escaped from his creditors, because the preface to his *Praeludia* is signed 'The Hague, 10 July 1616'. He was to remain in The Hague for the rest of his life. He had not gone entirely bankrupt, because on 5 May 1616 he paid off the final instalment of his house in Leiden. The house was now used to pacify his creditors: on 2 December 1617 the Court of Holland gave permission for the public auction of *De vergulde passer*, which was disposed of in November 1618 for the paltry sum of f. 410.

Joachim van den Hove died in The Hague shortly before 23 April 1620. On that day the Supreme Court pronounced that his children could, as they had requested, accept their father's estate excluding his debts, which were likely to exceed the value of his property. Van den Hove must have spent his last days in poverty, in spite of having been an eminent, successful musician in Leiden for over twenty years.

### *Nicolaes Vallet*

It was not only in Leiden that the lute flourished in this period. A few years later, Amsterdam proved to have attracted a young promising lutenist from abroad: Nicolaes Vallet.

In many ways Vallet's life ran parallel to that of Joachim van den Hove. His importance, too, is due to a number of splendid publications of lute music, financed by himself: the two volumes of *Secretum musarum* (1615 and 1616), printed in a Dutch and a French version; *Een en twintich Psalmen Davids* (1615) and the *Regia pietas* (1620). A new edition of *Secretum musarum* appeared in 1618 and again in 1619 with the Amsterdam printer Jan Janszoon, with some changes in the preliminary matter and under a new title: *Paradisus musicus*. Later still, two more volumes of Vallet's music for ensemble appeared, entitled *Apolloos soete lier* (1642, for violin and bass) and *Le mont Parnasse* (c.1644, for four instruments), both published in Amsterdam. The second book is lost, and of the first book only the bass partbook has survived.

Nicolaes (or in the French form, Nicolas) Vallet was born around 1583 in Corbény, north of Paris, near Laon. He probably came to Amsterdam not long before 1613; he is first mentioned in a notarial deed of 7 February of that year, in which it says that he is resident in Amsterdam. Also, on 16 April 1613, he authorised his father, Jean Vallet, then living in Paris, to collect his income in Corbény and surroundings; the family was clearly moneyed. There is no mention of the reason why Nicolaes left for the Dutch Republic, but it was most likely his religious convictions.



Nicolaes Vallet, *Secretum musarum I*, the reprint of 1618, title page with Vallet's portrait

Although during the reign of King Henry IV French Huguenots were no longer persecuted by the Roman Catholics as much as in the 16th century, when Henry IV died in 1610, the prospects for Protestant Reformed people were bleak. Vallet's Calvinist sympathies, reflected in the psalm settings he published and his variations on the Lord's Prayer, are the most likely reason for his emigration.

It is probably just coincidence that the first mention of Vallet in the Republic is in a testimony as a witness of a café brawl, just like in Van den Hove's case. In the document in question, dated 7 February 1613, Annetgen Willemsdochter, widow of Jan Willemszoon, Rogier Staveleij, Nicolaes Vallet, Ambrosius Stuwaert and Franchoijs Lupo, a cittern builder, all resident in Amsterdam, make a statement at the request of Thomas Streijker, an Englishman and close acquaintance of theirs, in which they describe how Thomas had been harassed in an inn by two drunken peasants from De Rijp, and how one peasant kicked over a table spread with food and pulled a knife, while the other one threw stones in through the window which hit his friend on the head. The threatened Thomas thereupon drew his dagger and was forced to stab his attacker through his left arm in the chest. The civic guards were called, and in the end eight of them were needed to get the peasant out of the building.

When Vallet arrived in Amsterdam he settled as a lutenist and a musician. We know from his publications that he lived on Nes in 1615-1616, in the house called *De vergulde bijl*. In 1620 he appears to have moved to Leliegracht, where he lived in the house called *Bastille*. He had to earn a living by his lute and he managed to do so very well in the first few years, to judge by the expensive music books he published at the time; the cost must have been considerable. In the notarial archives we find a number of contracts between Vallet and pupils and associates, which give us a glimpse of his practice as a musician in the Amsterdam of those days.

In 1616, for instance, Vallet agreed with David Gibson, inhabitant of Amsterdam and, to judge by his name, another Englishman, that the latter's son Jeremias, aged ten or so, would be apprenticed to Vallet for a period of six years, serving him faithfully, and Vallet would teach him the lute and other instruments, 'as well as he could and as well as Jeremias could understand' (*als hem eenichsints doenlijck sal wesen ende de voorseyde Jeremias begrijpen sal connen*). In the first four years Gibson would be paying Vallet 9 Flemish pounds a year for Jeremias' board and lodging and instruction. On top of that he would keep his son in clothes and other necessities (*in cledinghe ende redinge*) for the first three years; after that, Vallet would be responsible for those costs. If Jeremias were to run away from his master in the first two years, Gibson would do his utmost to return him, and if that proved impossible, he would pay Vallet 50 guilders; if Jeremias were to run away after four years, his father would have to pay 100 guilders. These stipulations make it clear that over time, Jeremias would become increasingly valuable to Vallet; if and when a pupil became a reasonably trained musician he would, of course, be expected to assist his teacher in his musical practice.

Vallet, in the meantime, seems to have earned most of his income by playing at weddings and other festivities, apparently most often in an ensemble setting. In 1617, for instance, master Hendrik de Groot, together with Vallet and master Joost Thomaszoon, claimed a sum of 5 Flem-



ish pounds from Jan van Vijven or Louis Elsevier (the latter had previously been a neighbour of Joachim van den Hove's in Leiden) in connection with their performance at Jan van Vijven's wedding in Leiden. It sounds as if Vallet was then in the service of De Groot, but later on he was always the leading musician. In 1620 he took on the Englishman Richard Swift for a period of two years to play at weddings, banquets and aubades. According to the contract, Swift would receive free board and lodging, and for performances he would be entitled to half the remuneration the other musicians received. Furthermore he was allowed to have pupils of his own, on condition that his services to Vallet did not suffer as a consequence. In January 1626 it was Anthonij Grelle from the land of Lüneburg who was taken on by Vallet. Anthonij would serve him for two years in a musical capacity, playing the instruments he had mastered, and he promised not to pass on Vallet's compositions to third parties, and not to play in other ensembles. In return for all this, Grelle received from Vallet board, lodging and laundry services and also part of the income from performances. At weddings or banquets where people danced, he earned 4 guilders a day, without dancing 3 guilders, and for an aubade 2 guilders; Vallet was allowed to keep only 4 guilders a week at most. These stipulations tell us that Vallet arranged performances very frequently, thus assuring himself of a steady basic income.

Probably Grelle did stay not long in Vallet's service, because on 12 November 1626, Vallet entered into an agreement with the abovementioned Richard Swift, master Eduard Hancock and master Robbert Tindel, all of them musicians and burghers of Amsterdam, in which they committed themselves to play in ensembles at all possible weddings, banquets and on other occasions, for a period of six years. In the notarial deed the conditions of the agreement are set out in detail. The associates, for instance, will divide the revenue of a performance equally, on the understanding that Vallet is to supply the necessary attributes (the instruments and the music?) and will therefore get 10 *stuivers* per evening from each of them, except from the man who brought in the performance. The partners are not allowed to play at parties on their own initiative on pain of a fine of 10 Flemish pounds per infringement. If only three musicians are needed for a performance, the one staying at home will receive half of the wage of the three players. If only two musicians are needed, the person who brought in the performance will go together with one of the others, and they will be entitled to the full amount. Moreover there are detailed rules about sickness or the absence outside town of one of the members. We also happen to come across Swift and Hancock together in a notarial deed of 1625, but this time there is no mention of collaboration; they had been engaged in a scuffle. Swift seems to have been a bit of a quarrelsome type anyway, for in 1630 he received a head wound in a fight. In the 1630s he is shown to have been not only a musician, but also an innkeeper, in *De Drie Morianen* on Nieuwendijk. Eduard Hancock, too, is called a city player and innkeeper after his death in 1654; it seems to have been a quite common combination.

Back to Nicolaes Vallet. In the abovementioned deed of 1626, he also concluded an agreement with Eduard Hancock to set up a dance school at Vallet's house, again for a period of six years. Two thirds of the pupils' contributions would go to Vallet and one third to Hancock. Both would



give dancing lessons twice a day: from half past ten until half past eleven in the morning and from four till seven in the afternoon. In cases of absence, a fine of one shilling was to be paid on each occasion, half of which would go to the poor and the other half to the aforementioned company of four 'for refreshments'. The entire company would play at the dance school every Sunday afternoon, four hours in summer and three hours in winter, whereby one third of the revenue from the dancing audience was for Vallet and the other three partners would divide the remaining two-thirds among themselves.

By playing dance music at parties and celebrations, and certainly by opening a dance school, Vallet went against the prevailing morals of his time as propagated by the Church and the authorities. Dancing was considered sinful and was thought to lead to socially undesirable conduct. In the 1620s in particular, the Calvinistic dogmatists of the Counter-Reformist movement had a great deal of influence on public life; the Amsterdam minister Adriaen Smout, a man we shall meet again later, preached from the pulpit every Sunday against all that was filthy or dirty. That certainly included dance schools, fanatically opposed by the religious leaders. Calvinist church members were regularly reprimanded because they had been dancing. This happened mainly to people from the upper classes, to set an example. Dancing at weddings, too, was discouraged, certainly if professional musicians were involved. But from the contract between Vallet and Anthonij Grelle, with its specific mention of the income from weddings and parties, we may deduce that the reproaches from the Church were not exactly effective.

In this matter, the secular authorities joined the side of the Reformed Church. In some cities ordinances against dancing, especially dancing on Sundays, were pronounced. In Utrecht, for instance, it was announced in 1602 that on Sundays between nine o'clock in the morning and four in the afternoon, all dance schools and fencing schools should be closed. In an Amsterdam ordinance of 1629, published under the chapter *Tegens Hoererije, Bordeelen en Dansscholen* [Against Whoredom, Brothels and Dance Schools], married people, young or old, man or woman, were forbidden to visit dance schools because 'there, the door is open wide to all kinds of unchastity' (*een ruyme deure geopent word tot alre-handen onkuysheden*); the same prohibition also concerned unmarried women, so that in practice only unmarried men were allowed to dance. Yet representations of dance schools show an elegant public of both sexes occupied with dancing and, it must be said, also with flirting. The well-known engraver Michel le Blon designed a plaque for Vallet in 1615 with a picture that may have represented Vallet's own dance school – it would imply that he ran a similar institution even before 1626. Although the Walloon Church, to which Vallet probably belonged, was less opposed to dancing than the Dutch Reformed Church, we may still deduce from one thing and another that Vallet was in no way a quibbler in religious matters. It is characteristic of him that he composed a five-part *Bruylofts-gesang*, a wedding song, on the occasion of the wedding of the young aristocrat Lucas van Valckenburgh, who was an explicit critic of the Church's measures against dancing.

There is, however, an indication that Vallet did run the risk of getting into trouble by going against the grain of the more orthodox part of the population. In 1615 he had published two lute books, the first part of *Secretum musarum* and the *Een en twintich Psalmen Davids*,



Michel le Blon, engraving for a plaque for Nicolaes Vallet, 1615. The picture shows a dancing company, possibly Vallet's dance school. The Hague, Koninklijke Bibliotheek, 133 L 4 (*liber amicorum* of Girard Thibault), f. 114

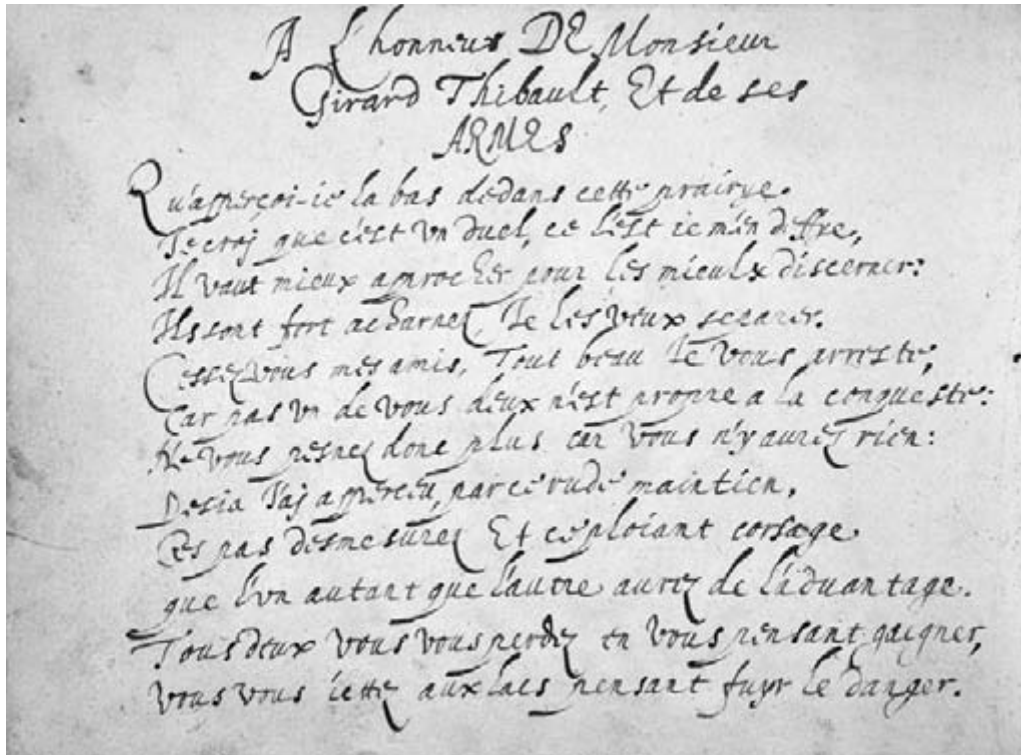
*gestelt om te singhen ende spelen, 'tsamen* [Twenty-one Psalms of David, arranged to be sung and played, together]. In 1616 the second part of *Secretum* followed, which was dedicated to a few important Amsterdam gentlemen from rich merchant stock. Apart from the usual flatteries of the addressees, Vallet used the dedication in this volume to rally against otherwise unspecified folk who had, apparently, tried to prevent its publication through lies and ignorance. The sonnet that precedes it, and which is dedicated to Vallet, again refers openly to the opposition as 'loathsome spiders' (*vuyle Spinnen*), who 'will unrestrainedly suck from your flowers their pouch full with lethal poison, to their own detriment and cost' (*uut uwe Bloemkens eel vry suyghen haren sack vol doodelijck venijn, tot eyghen schaedt, en lack*); the best way to take revenge is to play his music, inspired by the Muses, to those who have common sense and are not 'overcome by hatred'. The poet then mentions Momus, the mythical Greek God who personified scorn and unfounded criticism. The poem is signed with the maxim 'Suffer and Hope', the motto of the scholar, man of letters, translator and pamphlet writer Reinier Telle (c.1558/9-1618). He, too, had always shown himself to be an outspoken advocate of mutual tolerance, but the increasingly violent actions of the Counter-Remonstrants had driven him into the arms of the Remonstrants. It is obvious that some orthodox people who objected to the publication of the Psalms would have been hostile to Vallet; combining those sacred texts with secular music in a home setting must have been an abomination to some.

The abovementioned publications are part of a series published by Vallet; beside his playing and teaching activities, he would have assumed that he could also earn money with his lute music that way. In any case, soon after his arrival in Amsterdam he set up an ambitious publication programme and asked the States General's permission to publish a lute book. On 2 September 1615 he was issued patents for five years to publish a tablature book called *het Secreet van de Musique* [the Secret of Music], which would teach youngsters to play the lute in a short time; they would play 'edifying tunes and besides the one hundred and fifty Psalms of David'. At the same time Vallet sent a request to the mayor, the aldermen and treasurers of Amsterdam, asking them if he might dedicate to them his tablature book *Instructie ende Secreet der luyte*, which he had engraved in copper plates at great expense to himself.

And indeed, in 1615-1616 *Secretum musarum* appeared in two parts, but instead of the announced 150 psalms, in 1615 Vallet published a small volume with 21 psalms: *Een en twintich Psalmen Davids*. The 150 psalms did not appear until 1620, under the title *Regia pietas*. The music was engraved on copper plates, a new and much more expensive procedure for music printing than the usual typesetting with individual letters and symbols.

The introduction and the preliminaries of the *Secretum* appeared in a French and a Dutch version. Vallet probably wrote the text in French, which was then translated by somebody else; the fashionable and purist Dutch of the introduction cannot possibly be Vallet's own, because he had not been in the country very long. Louis Grijp considers it possible that the translation was made by Reinier Telle, mentioned above. In the French version there is a Latin poem by R. Vitellius and French sonnets by R. Bridault and Vallet himself – the author addresses his public in one sonnet, and his book in the other.

That Vallet was not averse to literary exertions is proved by the long allegorical poem he wrote in the *liber amicorum* of the well-known fencing master Girard Thibault (c.1574-1627), who left Amsterdam in 1615 after a stay of several years and who was given this book by his friends on his departure. Among the people who contributed to the book, we find the names of well-known artistic personalities such as Theodoor Rodenburg, Anna Roemers Visscher and Bredero, the names of a number of gentlemen, mostly young merchants from rich families, both born and bred Amsterdam people, as well as people from the Southern Netherlands. Some of them were part of Vallet's circle in some other way. That goes for Albert van den Burgh, Mathijs van Beeck, Antoine Coignet, Lubbert van Axel and Pieter Pauw, the 'Art-Loving Gentlemen' and 'very gracious, well-loved friends' to whom Vallet dedicated the second part of his *Secretum* in 1616. Vallet clearly knew them personally, either as lute pupils, as patrons for his performances or as clients in his dance school. Which is also true for the men who sponsored the publication of his *Regia pietas* in 1620: beside Mathijs van Beeck and Lubbert van Axel, whom we have already mentioned, they were Michiel van Eijck, Jacomo Pauw, Jeronimus Joriszoon Waephelier and Guillaume Bartelot le jeune. By way of thanks, their coats of arms, engraved by Michel le Blon, would be given a place of honour in the book. The artist and art dealer Michel le Blon (1587-1656) is one of the persons who figured in Thibault's *liber amicorum*; he not only wrote a sonnet in it, but also illustrated Vallet's contribution with the design for the plaque mentioned above, which



Inscription by Nicolas Vallet in the *liber amicorum* of Girard Thibaut, f. 110r

he engraved and on which he included the inscription (translated from the Latin): 'To sir N. Vallet, most deserving pupil of the Muses and the Graces, given in friendship by M. le Blon, 1615'.

If Joachim Van den Hove's financial position is an open book to us, not so that of Nicolaes Vallet. It seems he did well for a long time, even if he probably had to find additional funding for his expensive publications. It is possible that he partly paid for his first books with the money he must have received from his father in return from his income in Corbény and surroundings. After he had published his *Secretum* in 1615-1616, he probably sold the plates to the Amsterdam printer Jan Janszoon, who published the two volumes again in adapted versions in 1618 and 1619. With the revenue of that transaction – and with the means provided by his benefactors – Vallet subsequently brought out the large and therefore expensive volume *Regia pietas* in 1620. Of course, those books also yielded an income out of sales, on top of the sum paid by the people to whom they were dedicated: the first part of the *Secretum* to Prince Maurits of Nassau and the States General, the second part to the Amsterdam gentleman mentioned above, and the *Regia pietas* to King James I of England; the 21 *Psalmen Davids* had no specific dedication.

But Vallet also had expenses that were not all really justifiable. He is known, for instance,

to have taken part in lotteries, which were often organised illegally. With such lotteries, the relatively small stakes people put in were recorded, as were the prizes to be won, which often consisted of luxury objects or works of art such as lutes, paintings, clocks, or deerskin gloves. The prize tickets were drawn among general merrymaking and the occasion would often be livened up with music. On one such occasion, Vallet is mentioned as one of the depositors for ten lots; on another occasion, it is recorded that he would entertain the company with music and that his fee, 5 pounds, would serve as his stake.

How Vallet's income and his spending pattern were related is not for us to know, but one thing is certain: in 1633 he was in financial trouble. He was in arrears with the rent he owed Grietgen Henricx, beer vendor by profession, and apparently the owner of his house; she was represented in the case by her husband Gerrit Wiggerszoon Duijsendaelders. In connection with it, the notary public Jacob Jacobs drew up an inventory of Vallet's household effects. It shows that he had rather expensive taste. In his household, we find porcelain crockery (at the time a rare and very expensive product), and costly clothes of satin, damask, brocade and taffeta. The large number of paintings that hung in different rooms in his house is particularly striking: in the downstairs side room, thirteen large and small paintings plus some twelve gilded portraits; in the inside room, four 'simple' paintings of little value; in the front room on the first floor, ten paintings; in the back room on the first floor, five paintings; in the front room on the top floor, another six paintings; and in the small room over the kitchen, seven simple paintings. There were not many musical items: eight copper printing plates, possibly leftovers from the *Regia pietas*, perhaps the engravings of the title page and coats of arms, and furthermore some music books not yet bound, perhaps the remainder of the same publication. In a notarial deed drawn up at the same time, Vallet states that he will transfer part of his household goods to Gerrit Duijsendaelders in connection with the rent arrears. He may keep those goods, but they may also be reclaimed at any time. As a kind of annex there is a list of the goods concerned, and in that we find his instruments, which were not included in the household inventory: six lutes, a bass viol and 'five more instruments, namely citterns and violins'.

From the inventory we should be able to deduce whether Vallet had a wife and a family, but there is little to enlighten us. Jewellery and women's clothes do not figure in the inventory, apart from three women's undershirts (curiously enough only in the second list). Other items pointing to the presence of a woman are a brazier and spinning wheel, but they could also have belonged to a housekeeper.

Little else is known about Vallet's life. It is possible that he stayed on in Amsterdam, because that is where in 1642 and c.1644 he published another two music books. No data have been found with regard to his death, which must have happened after the last year mentioned.

### *Other lutenists of the Golden Age: a survey*

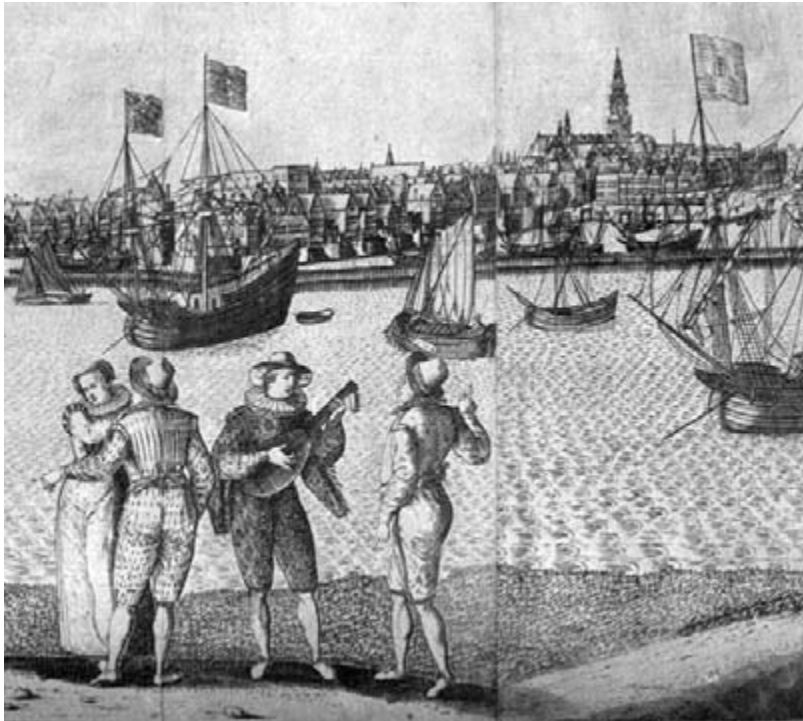
Joachim van den Hove and Nicolaes Vallet are the top names in the Dutch art of the lute in the Golden Age, but they were by no means isolated figures. We know the names and occasionally



some details of other people who were *luytenist*, *luytspeelder* or *luytslager*, it is just that we have little or nothing of their music. Some of them may have been modest musicians who could reel off the cast-iron repertoire of tunes and improvised dances, but fortunately there are others who have left us some compositions or even a handful of pieces. This is possibly the result of their being lute teachers: as a teacher, one was supposed to supply the pupil with material for the lessons and such pieces by the teachers must have often been fairly simple. At times we do in fact hear of actual lute lessons. And then there is the surprising case of a Leiden lutenist, unknown until now, from whose hand fairly large numbers of compositions appear to have survived.

We will now provide a survey of the professional lutenists of whom we know. This has never been done before, and therefore such a summary falls within the scope of this book. The data gathered from various archives are as yet mostly fragmented, but on the basis of them we can form a first impression of the lutenists working in the Dutch Republic.

Let us begin with Amsterdam, where from the turn of the century quite a number of professional lutenists have been shown to be active. Between 1597 and 1640 there is mention of master **Jeronimus** (Jerome, Jeroen) **Torel**, originally from Brussels. His father was Walradt Torel, who also lived in Amsterdam. In 1594 Walradt had played nine times, at the city's expense, 'with four



Pieter Bast, *View of Amsterdam from the north* (1599). Engraving and etching, detail



assistant players' for Maurice of Nassau when he was passing through the city; it is possible that his son was one of those assistants. In 1597 Jeronimus, then 26 years old, married the 22-year-old Judith de Laigne from London. In 1603 he married again, this time Ursula van den Berghe, with whom he had had five children by 1622. In 1617 he is mentioned as a *luytenist*, but later he entered into the city's service; in 1633 f. 208 was paid to him and to Willem Janszoon, city musicians of Amsterdam, for the purchase of several instruments by the city. In 1626 'Jeroen music player' received f. 4 from the estate of the late Andries de Graeuw for lute lessons given to his son. In 1640 Jeronimus lived on Reestraat, but he also owned the house on Oudezijds Achterburgwal, and in 1619 he had bought a house on Keizersgracht. He was obviously a man of easy circumstances; that is why he could afford to buy a painting by Cornelis Claeszoon van Wieringen in 1614 for the sum of f. 15.

Probably rather less prosperous was the lute player **Johannes Marino Belloni**, also known as Jan Bellon, who lived in St Jorishof in 1651. He had been born around 1600 in 'Tarine' (the place name is difficult to read; it is possibly situated in France, where he had relatives). In 1651, when he was 51, he married Annetje Jans van Schaep, 50 years old, who lived at the same address. He is mentioned again in 1652, 1657 and 1658, the last time as 'a former lutenist'; he may have given up his profession because of sickness or retirement.

In the same period, in 1657, **Richard Hancock** (Hantkock, Hanghcock), lutenist, became a burgher of Amsterdam. According to another source he was 34 years old in 1679, so he must have been born around 1645. His wife Cornelia Witsert died in February 1689. The couple lived on Weesperplein and had three children. Richard himself died in 1692; he was living on Passeerdersgracht at the time. To judge by his name, Richard Hancock must have had origins in England, like the Eduard Hancock we got to know as an associate of Nicolaes Vallet. In the middle of the 17th century, however, there was another Hancock living in Amsterdam, also called Richard; he died in 1672, leaving a wife called Geertrui and four children. The latter Richard Hancock was an innkeeper. His inn seems to have had a questionable reputation: in 1641 his wife was accused of accommodating prostitutes, falsely it seems.

The last Amsterdam lutenist we know of is also a foreigner. **Albertus Girard** (or Gerardus) was born in Saint-Mihiel (Lorraine) in 1595, but would have found refuge in the Dutch Republic after 1610 for religious reasons. In 1613 he lived in Amsterdam behind the city hall; his occupation is recorded as *luytslager*. In 1614 he married Suzanne de Noetbes (des Mouettes, Nouettes) in the Walloon Church and their first child was born in 1615. Girard was only briefly active in Amsterdam, because in 1617 he registered as a mathematics student at Leiden University; he found a place to live in Diefsteeg. Although he was called a musician in the sources, after that, he is mainly known as a mathematician. In 1625, for instance, he published an improved version of Simon Stevin's mathematics of 1585. Probably around 1626 he became an engineer in the service of the States General, in which capacity he was present at the siege of 's-Hertogenbosch in 1629. He died in December 1632 in The Hague.

The metropolis of Amsterdam and the university town of Leiden – more about the latter later – were clearly favourite places to settle for lutenists, but from the scarce data in archives we can deduce that professional lutenists were also active in other towns in the Republic.

In Utrecht, there was a lutenist called **Cornelis Janszoon van den Bongaert**. He must have been born around 1570 and lived in Donkerstraat. Around 1595 he was married to Sophia Claesdochter. Cornelis was rather the odd one out in the family as to his profession, because his two brothers were respectively steward and bailiff of Nijenrode, and his sister was married to a bailiff. Cornelis van den Bongaert died in July 1619.

Later we hear of other lutenists in Utrecht. In 1643 a *luytenist* **Franciscus Melem** is mentioned (he signed his name as ‘Maylleme’, so he may have been of French extraction), who concluded a contract before the notary public with Anthonis Pelt, a medical doctor, and Daniel Grien, a barber-surgeon. Pelt and Grien undertook to cure Melem from ‘a certain accident with which he was infected’, and the patient promised to pay each of them 30 Carolus guilders, plus the medication needed for his cure. Payment would take place when he was cured or at the latest three months after signing the deed.

In Melem’s case it is the only time he is mentioned, but another lutenist is found much more often in the sources, again in notarial deeds. That is **Theodoor Berry**, *luytslager*, who in 1641 made an agreement with his spouse Anna van Ebbenhorst about their estate. In 1644 Mechelt Cramers, previously a servant girl of the late Anthoni vander Hulle, declared at the request of master Theodoor Berry, *luijtenist alhier* [a local lutenist], that he, Berry, delivered four flutes to the house of Vander Hulle, and that she was certain the instruments belonged to Berry. After 1650 Berry is called *musicien deser stadt*, so that we know he had been appointed as a Utrecht city musician. Possibly not as a lutenist; in view of the flutes mentioned above, he probably also played wind instruments. At that time, he lived on the east side of Jufferstraat in a house he rented from master Marten van Ebbenhorst, another city musician. Berry is last mentioned in 1668 as being alive; he is then only referred to as a *musicyn*. He later married again, because in 1696 there is mention of his widow, called Elisabeth van Boshuysen. In 1670 his daughter Johanna Berry married the de *constschilder* [painter] Corneleis Jansson van Keulen; she was then living with her son, Philips Berry.

In other towns, the data about lutenists are much scarcer. That does not mean that there were in fact fewer lutenists living there (in proportion, at least) than in Amsterdam, Leiden or Utrecht; we could be looking at a distorted picture because there has been little archive research into musicians there.

In Alkmaar a *luytslager* **Joris Bemont** is mentioned in 1614. On 4 July of that year Pieter Jacobs, organist, made a notarial statement about his good behaviour. Bemont was an Englishman.

Master **Daniel Danielszoon** is mentioned in 1614 as a musician in Haarlem; he had to pay for a woollen vest. In later years he is mentioned again; in 1625 and 1627 he is called a *luytslager*.

In Middelburg, too, there is mention of a lutenist, but not in connection with his profession. In 1603 master **Jeronimus**, *leutenist* in the town, still owed 1 pound in connection with worsted cloth delivered to him.

There is more information about a lutenist in Dordrecht, master **Hendrick Ambrosius**. That is firstly because he got married no fewer than three times, and marriages are often a source of useful information: in registrations of intended marriages, partners are usually mentioned with their place of birth, age, parents and profession, as well details of any previous marriages. In 1605 master Hendrick was the husband of Janneken Herman Corstiaensdochter, who had previously been married to Gerrit Leyten. In 1614 the marriage settlements between Hendrick Ambrosius Pacx and Maria Dionijdsdochter were laid down; they did not have community of property. He was then suddenly called 'Pacx', while in his third marriage he was known under yet another name: in 1632 Hendrick Ambrosius 'who is now still called Van der Gerruwen' married Cornelia van Bywaert. After that, a lutenist called Hendrick Ambrosius van der Gerwen is indeed mentioned again. Further data are scarce. In 1631 he was a witness in a guardianship arrangement by the Dordrecht organist master Gerbrant Anthoniszoon Valck. In 1638 a son of Ambrosius died in Amsterdam. The last time Ambrosius is mentioned dates from 1638; a modern note, not mentioning the original source, gives the rather cryptic information that he had been sitting somewhere drinking wine with a *toebacq* pipe in his mouth. Maybe he is the Hendrick who was born in 1581 as the son of Jan Ambrosius and Maricken Stevensdochter van Rijsborch.

In The Hague we know of master **Jeronimus van Someren**; for two years he taught the lute to the young Constantijn Huygens and his brother Maurits in the first decade of the 17th century. Much later, in the spring of 1640, Constantijn's eldest two children, Constantijn and Christiaan, would be entrusted to him. He was married, as a deed of 1625 tells us. He died on 5 March 1651; in the inventory of his estate we find, among other things 'a flat box with some tablature books, and some lutes, good ones and bad ones' (*een plat kisge met een deel tabeletuurboucken, en enige luyten, goet en quaet*).

Finally we return to Leiden, where our search for lutenists from the Northern Netherlands began with the 16th-century masters Jacob Gerritszoon and Willem Corneliszoon. In this town, too, a fair number of lutenists from around the turn of the century are known to us by name. One of them is **David Janszoon Padbrué** (1553-1635). He came from a Haarlem family of musicians and as a boy he had sung in the choir of the St Bavo church and the *capilla flamenca* in Madrid. Padbrué registered at Leiden University in 1580. He must also have been active as a lute player in the town because when he married in 1587 he was called a *luytslager* and *meester vande musiecke*. After the wedding he went to live in Amsterdam, where he became a flax merchant and ran a thriving business. In 1601 the setting of all 150 Psalms in four- to eight-part motet-style compositions by David Janszoon Padbrué was published under the title *Psalm-geclanck*, of which only the tenor part has been preserved. The ten pieces in the Thysius Lute Book by 'master David' may with some certainty be attributed to Padbrué.

In the same lute book there are also three short pieces that are ascribed to 'master Marten'. In the Leiden archives we do find a master **Maerten Persijn** (who is also called Perseel and Persell, and once even Passer in the sources), described as a *speelman*, *luytslager* and *citharoedus* [lutenist]; in the years between 1596 and 1604 he was landlord to 26 students, most of them from

abroad. In spite of that income, he had a hard time financially; in fact he was deeply in debt. In January 1601 master Maerten Passer, *luytslager*, was sentenced in connection with various debts; in 1602 there was a claim against him of f. 156, for money he had borrowed and only partly repaid. In the same year his rent arrears amounted to f. 98, and he was ordered to pay off several debts: f. 295:2 for beer, f. 22:10 for what he had bought on credit, and f. 15 for bread. And in 1603 he was ordered 'to clear his hands of the moneys of Franchois van Persijn still in his possession'.

In the Leiden archives of 1610-1620 a lutenist **Harmanus Pijs** or Piso is mentioned, but we know little of him. On 14 October 1617 he was registered as a lutenist (*citharoedus*) in the Leiden *Album studiosorum*. In 1621 we see him again, this time as 'master H. Piso, luytenist tot Leyden'; he signed himself 'Piese'. We know of only one lute piece by him: a prelude in a recently discovered manuscript that is kept in Berlin. It is a short composition, improvisational in character. The same Pijs was probably the man who was organist at the Hoogland church in Leiden from 1624 until his death in 1645. We see him once more as a keyboard player, when he made a statement about a two-manual harpsichord. In 1623 it had been taken from the house of Jacob Ferrerus, a music-loving doctor, by a certain person called Martynus, a harpsichord builder. Piso declares that he had played the instrument several times and had tuned it, too, and that it was worth no more than 9 or 10 Flemish pounds.



Berlin N. Mus. Ms. 479, f. 48v: *Praeludium H. Pyso*. The only known composition by Herman Pijs

Very little is known about master **Aelbrecht**, lutenist, who still owed Bartholomeus van der Bilt f. 10:7, the balance of a payment for books bought. The note in question is undated, but Van der Bilt (Biltius) lived in Leiden between 1619 and 1626; later, in any case in 1633, he lived in The Hague. In 1619–1620 he is mentioned as a bookseller, and in 1625 as a substitute bailiff. We will have to place the note in Leiden in the first half of the 1620s. One Aelbrecht, living close to Rode Steen, possibly our lutenist, was buried on 4 February in St Peter's church.

A highly respected Leiden lutenist was **John Jordan**, mentioned above, known in that town as 'master Jan the Englishman', who lived there since 1608; he would originally have come to Leiden with a group of travelling actors and musicians. He was appointed town musician in 1610 and as such was expected to appear at banquets and other festivities organised by the magistrate and to entertain the guests with 'playing an instrument and otherwise'. He was a competent musician, as appears from the considerable sum of 36 guilders he was paid in 1617 for the 'extraordinary skill' (*extraordinarie const*) with which he had amused the magistrate during the meal. He was still in the town's service in 1628, because in that year an instruction was issued that shows he gave musical performances together with the town's organists and other players 'on the cornet, *violijn* or other instruments' under the church organs, to wit on Sundays after the afternoon sermon and in the evening in St Peter's church or elsewhere. He may have also played the lute on such public occasions.

There was another English lutenist living in Leiden, named **Dudley Rosseter** (Rossetter, Rosettier, Rochette), son of the English composer Philip Rosseter, lutenist in the Royal Music from 1603 until his death in 1623. Dudley was born around 1600 and was probably called after his godfather Sir Robert Dudley, the illegitimate son of the Earl of Leicester. In 1626 he registered in the legal faculty of Leiden University. From 1632 onwards he is always called a lutenist in the Leiden sources. Rosseter lived on Langebrug, where he was also a landlord for students. On 31 October 1632 Rosseter, *master luijtslager*, and his wife Anne Harpert drew up their last will and testament. When signing the document, incidentally, it took Rosseter two attempts to spell his name right; the first time he wrote 'Duldy'. Strangely enough we find a registration of the intended marriage of the couple again in the Delft archives, in April 1633, with the remark 'Attestation given to marry elsewhere'. The same document tells us that Anna was the widow of 'Ritsert Bratvoort' (the Dutchification of the name Richard Bradford). As yet, we know little about the rest of Rosseter's life. In 1632 he authorised Simon Belanger, 'master in the French language' (*maistre de langue franchoise*), as well as David Hamael and A. Isaac, both doctors of medicine, to collect from Daniel Villain, once a student in Leiden and now resident in England, the sum of 743 francs, which he owed Dudley for borrowed money and board and lodging. In 1634 he had a dispute with Mathijs Overbeeck about the ownership of a 'cabinet', in which a statement was made by another Englishman living in Holland, the organ and harpsichord builder William Deacons. In 1638 Rosseter bought a house on the east side of Papengracht in Leiden, but he sold it again a year later. The last mention of him is in 1644, when he acted in Utrecht as godfather for his nephew Dudley, son of his brother Thomas Rosseter.

One wonders if Thomas Rosseter is the same as the Leiden lutenist **Thomas Reset** (Re-



seth), who in 1642 owed an innkeeper money for beer consumed; he is sentenced to pay f. 21:10. It seems doubtful, because as we will see, Thomas Rosseter was later known as a musical instrument builder in The Hague. However that may be, nothing else is known about this man Reset.

We know a little more about **Johannes Fresneau** (Fresnau, Frenou). On 30 March 1644 he gave notice of intended marriage to Anneke Asseling, daughter of the well-known local instrument maker Andries Asseling. Fresneau is then described as a lutenist and unmarried man from 'Zel in Berri' (Selles-sur-Cher, which was then the French province Berry); he was 28 years old. The groom lived in Breestraat, the bride still with her father on Rapenburg. On 4 November 1645 the couple's child, Maria, was baptised in the Roman-Catholic church Bakkerkerk, from which we can conclude that the father, too, was a Catholic. In 1665 we hear again of 'Johan Frenou', when settlements had to be made in connection with the inheritance of Anneke's mother, Maria van Croonenburch. On 25 October 1669 Fresneau, then living on Steenshuur, was very ill and made up his last will and testament, to which he made some amendments on 18 January 1670. He must have died shortly before 22 April 1670, when an inventory was made of his estate. From this short list we may infer that he was rather poor, and less well off than, for instance, Nicolaes Vallet; Fresneau only had three paintings, one of them depicting Christ at the cross, and four small paintings (*tafereeltjes*), and no expensive clothes and household goods. But the inventory included 50 books, large and small, as well as 12 lutes, good ones and bad ones, 2 theorbos, 2 basses, 2 guitars, 2 citterns, 2 old instruments, and a case with some music books and leaves (*50 boucken, soo groot als kleyn; 12 luytten, soo goet als quaet; 2 theorbes; 2 bassen; een guitterren; 2 cyters; 2 ouwe instrumenten; een coffer met eenige muysieckboucken ende blaaderen*). This points in every way to him having been a professional musician, who also played, beside the lute, related instruments such as the cittern, theorbo and guitar. In view of the large number of instruments, it seems he also traded in them.

This Johannes Fresneau seems to have been the only lute player in the Dutch Republic who, after the heyday of Joachim van den Hove and Nicolaes Vallet, left a more or less representative corpus of lute music. He never published any music, but in some manuscripts we find music by a composer sometimes referred to as Fresnau, sometimes Du Fresneau or Dufresneau. Up until now, the literature has not known how to deal with this lutenist of whom nothing was known. Ten compositions of Fresneau are included in the manuscript known as Goëss I, one of the two lute books compiled between 1650 and 1660 for Johan van Reede, lord of Renswoude, who copied part of the music himself; we shall look more closely at these books later. Van Reede was a Utrecht man who was a friend of Constantijn Huygens'; we also know that part of the repertoire in Van Reede's manuscripts (two for lute, and another two for viol) stems from the musical circles in which Huygens moved. It has therefore been speculated that Fresneau should be looked for in the Netherlands. It was once suggested that he could be identical to one Carolus Margonne Dufresnoy from Paris, who registered at Utrecht University in 1646, but that proved untenable. On the contrary, there is everything to be said for the supposition that the composer 'Fresnau' in Goëss I is none other than the Leiden lutenist of that name. That is all the more likely because his work is hardly found in other manuscripts, as might be expected from a composer who lived so far away from the lute centre of Paris.





*Les Larmes de Fresneau*, copied by Johan van Reede. Schloß Ebenthal, Austria, Ms. Goëss I, f. 24v-25r

There is, however, one more manuscript with a number of Fresneau's compositions: the book with the shelf mark 40626, which used to be in Berlin and turned up after the Second World War in Kraków. That lute book was written around 1650-1660, and one piece, a prelude by Fresneau, is dated 17 June 1658. All Fresneau's pieces, no less than 30 in number, were entered by Hand B, the scribe who copied most of the book. Nothing is known about the background of the manuscript. The repertoire consists, apart from Fresneau's work, of internationally familiar French music; the many concordances with the 'Utrecht' Goëss manuscripts are striking. The compiler obviously had connections in the Netherlands, or may even have been Dutch.

The compositions in Goëss I and 40626, and a few isolated pieces in some 17th-century manuscripts, add up to a respectable corpus of 38 pieces for Fresneau. Five of the pieces attributed to him are for guitar but seem to be transcriptions of lute compositions; of one, the lute version is actually still extant. Fresneau's oeuvre is in the well-known *style brisé* of French lutenists of the period, and easily holds its own in that illustrious company. Here we have serious, profound music; it is characteristic that of the 32 pieces for lute, no fewer than twenty are slow (nine allemandes, six sarabandes, four preludes and one chaconne), and only ten are in a fast tempo (seven courantes, three gigue and one bourree). This is in contrast with many French composers; 50 per cent of the oeuvre of the most influential of French lutenists, Ennemond Gaultier, consists of courantes. The titles of some of his allemandes point to a tragic touch in Fresneau's music: *Tombeau*, *Les Larmes de Fresneau* (twice, for two different pieces), and *La Complainte pour l'Adieu de Monsieur Pollcenis*. Just as remarkable is the fact that twelve of the lute pieces by Fresneau are in F sharp minor, for lutenists the most expressive key. Finally we should point out that with his *Adieu*, Fresneau seems to join the ranks of the Leiden lute tradition; Van den Hove, too, left us several farewell pieces.

## CHAPTER 5

### A Lutenist of Standing: Constantijn Huygens

One lutenist about whom we are well informed was not a professional musician, but he nevertheless played an important role in the musical life of the Dutch Republic in the Golden Age. That lutenist is Constantijn Huygens (1596-1687). Nowadays he is regarded as one of the greatest Dutch poets of the century, but he himself thought of his literary work as unimportant, merely a way to fill the idle hours. As a civil servant he played a major role in politics and in the administration of the Republic. He served three consecutive princes of Orange: Frederik Hendrik, William II and later also William III. We also know him as the man who built Hofwijck, the country house still to be seen near The Hague. Apart from being a poet, a diplomat and a civil servant, Constantijn Huygens was a lifelong lover of music; he played several instruments well and composed, too. In his worldview, however, apart from providing relaxation after a busy day, the role of music was mainly a social one: a display of cultural versatility was a way of establishing contacts in higher circles. Huygens took great care to avoid creating the impression of being a professional musician; that was, after all, a class of people way below his own social level.

Constantijn Huygens was born in The Hague as the second son of Christiaan Huygens, secretary of the Council of State, and Suzanna Hoefnagel, who came from a wealthy Antwerp family. Together with his brother Maurits, Constantijn received excellent tuition in which French, Latin and Greek were the central focus (later he also learnt Italian and English). Equally important, however, were practical and artistic skills such as horse riding, fencing, music, drawing and sculpture, as well as dancing and a facility for moving elegantly and easily; this was all to prepare him for mixing in the aristocratic milieu. This was followed by an education in law, mathematics and logic. In 1616, he and his brother went to study law at Leiden University, from where he graduated in 1617. He then embarked on his society career with apprenticeship journeys in the company of ambassadors to England and Venice, and then to England again (1618-1624). In 1625 he received his first official appointment, as secretary to Prince Frederik Hendrik, an

appointment that was continued by his successor, William II. One of Huygens' duties was to oversee the domains of the Oranges. On top of his time-consuming work, he had a rich social life consorting with eminent literary people such as Jacob Cats and P.C. Hooft, Rembrandt the painter and Descartes the philosopher; he also corresponded with a number of important diplomats, scholars, writers and musicians abroad. In 1627 he married Suzanne van Baerle, his 'Sterre', who bore him five children before she died, ten years later (Plate 13).

Constantijn Huygens was extraordinarily musically gifted. He sang, and played the viola da gamba, the harpsichord, and instruments related to the lute such as the theorbo, and later also the guitar. But his great love was the lute. We know a great deal about Huygens' musical education because he described it more than once in his autobiographical writings. Around 1630, he wrote his first life history in Latin, but it remained unfinished. Much later, in 1678, when he was over 80, he wrote an autobiography in 2,162 Latin hexameters for his children. Three years later he wrote another autobiographical poem called *Cluijs-werck*, this time in Dutch verse. In these works he describes, not without pride, how musically talented he was as a child. At the tender age of two he would sing after his mother the French psalms she sang to him, and in his fifth year he started having structured singing lessons. He learnt the names of the notes with the help of a row of buttons on his winter jacket and then the pitches attached to them, which came easily to him. What is remarkable is that his brother and he were not taught the traditional six notes of the hexachord, but the modern system with the seven-note scale. The result was that little Constantijn was, within six weeks, able to sing at sight with the greatest ease. In February 1603 his instrumental lessons commenced. The first instrument was the viol, which was taught by an Englishman who is mentioned only as 'William H.' Again, Constantijn was so adept at it that within two months he was able to play 'all kinds of music with well-nigh unbelievable loveliness and effortlessness, both solo and in ensemble'. Once when he was allowed to play during a musical session, led by Jan Pieterszoon Sweelinck, at the house of the Jean Calandrini in Amsterdam, in his overconfidence he raised his eyes momentarily from the page, which caused him to lose his place. Overcome by embarrassment he did not manage to pick up the thread, so that he burst into tears and refused to play on. By his own account, Huygens was even more proficient on the viola da gamba than on the lute.

In February 1604, when Huygens was seven and a half, the lute lessons started. The boys were taught at home by master Jeronimus van Someren, 'a well-spoken young man who was well versed in the art for that time'. At the first appointment, when Constantijn and his brother Maurits entered the room and Van Someren was confronted with the very youthful age of his pupils, his heart sank; he did not believe that they would be able to learn to play 'this most difficult of all instruments' so young. That turned out differently, of course, because thanks to Constantijn's diligence, all went so well that within two years of lessons, he had surpassed his teacher in every way. He could play nearly anything at sight and was already a competent improviser. He preferred that to copying other people's music 'like a monkey', which he soon came to dislike because of the endless practising. That Huygens in his old age did not remember all the details correctly, or presented the truth as rather more glowing than it really was, is particularly clear

in the case of his lute lessons. Although according to his own words he only had lute lessons until early 1606 and was then supposed to be nearly accomplished, we have a letter by the young Huygens that contradicts this. In fact, on 20 March 1609 he wrote a Latin note to his father that contains the following statement:

With joy we have received your letter to me, and also that to my mother in which you gave us orders that I was not to start practising on the lute before your return, but that was already too late. Because master Jeronimus has already given me an exercise and I have mastered it sufficiently, for which reason, if your letter had not intervened, he would have given me another one tomorrow. But we shall, since you so wish, abandon it.

What is going on here? Either the old Huygens did not remember the age at which he started practising the lute, or he had lessons for much longer than two years; in any case, it is clear that there is something amiss in his autobiographical writings. However that may be, his words and also this letter show how intensively and at what a young age the musical education of children was approached in the circles of the aristocracy, the well-to-do burghers and higher civil servants. Although his father, Christiaan Huygens, may have been more ambitious and more headstrong than other parents, many other children would also have been brought into contact with music very early on. For many of them, lute lessons were probably a standard phenomenon in their early youth – in that way, too, the instrument was like the piano in later centuries. Constantijn's letter also provides us with a glimpse of how lute tuition was undertaken in practice. The pupil was given a piece of music, obviously adapted to his or her level, and was expected to practise it until they could play it finger perfect; then came the next piece, which would have been a bit more difficult.

Huygens, aged 82, about his lute lessons as a child:

That I spent, from the age of seven on, no less than two whole years on the lute, I still regret. At first it is necessary that somebody guides the hands when learning the basics, but where is the pleasure of progress when, again and again to the point of boredom, a teacher who has already long become superfluous, keeps hammering on it? One and the same rule is enough for similar motions. Once fingers know their task you should let them make music. They will learn by themselves from the indications on paper which finger should go where and which string your right thumb should strike. Then motivation and enthusiasm become your teachers. (Huygens, *Mijn leven verteld aan mijn kinderen in twee boeken*, vert. Frans Blom, pp. 67-69)

The same subject turned up three years later in *Cluys-werck*, vs. 445-470: Within six weeks Huygens learnt to sing the notes in tune and then the music lessons continued:

Tot d'Engelsche viool noch andere  
sess weken.

Doe quam de Luijt; daer viel wat  
langer mé te spreken,

Voor korte vingeren op sterck en  
stracker snaer:

Van seven duerde dat tot aen mijn  
negenst Jaer,

Uijt was de lererij, en ick swom  
sonder biesen

Op eigen houtje, schip en goed, winst  
en verliesen.

Waer toe 't gekomen is en hoe die  
Ball van Sneer

In 'trollen is gegroeijt, brengt  
d'ondervinding mé.

Een boogh, een Vinger-werck en  
kost mij niet versaden,

Mijn' heete Toon-lust most in wijder  
weelde baden,

Clavier op ijser en op Coper-draed,  
op Tinn

Tot Pijpen uijtgesmeedt, dat  
wonderlick versin,

Theorbes lang gedarmt, en uijt der  
Mooren landen

Gitarre, bastard Luijt, vermanden ick  
met handen

Die 'k alles machtigh vond, na dat  
het jong gewricht

Luijt-machtigh was gemaect, daer 't  
altmael voor swicht.

Noch bleef ick niet voldaan:  
'tverveelde mij Copije

Van mijn's gelijk te zijn; en, als ick 't  
recht belije,

Ick hiel mijn hand te goed, en mijn  
versin te sterck

*The English viola da gamba took six  
weeks.*

*Then came the lute, that took somewhat  
longer*

*For stubby fingers on stronger, stiffer  
strings*

*That lasted from my seventh till my ninth  
year;*

*Then I was accomplished. I swam  
without a rushes' ring.*

*By myself, with all my might, for good or  
bad.*

*What it led to, how the snowball*

*Grew while rolling, experience will tell.*

*A bow and plucking fingers were not  
enough for me,*

*My burning love of music had to spread  
its wings*

*By playing with a keyboard on iron or  
copper strings, or pewter*

*Forged into organ pipes, that miraculous  
invention;*

*Theorbos with long gut strings, and from  
the land of the Moors*

*The guitar, that bastard lute, I learnt to  
rule them all with my hands*

*Which, as I found, could do anything after  
the tender joints*

*Had mastered the lute, to which all others  
yield.*

*Still I wasn't satisfied; it bored me to be a  
duplicate*

*Of my peers, and to be honest*

*I considered my hands too skilful, my  
imagination too powerful*

Om niet als Aep te zijn van ander luijden werck.	<i>To play the work of others, like an aping monkey.</i>
Soo volgde drift op drift, soo baerden vonden vonden,	<i>Thus impulse followed upon impulse, one invention brought forth another;</i>
Soo pluckt' ick vruchten uijt mijn' vijfderhande gronden,	<i>Thus harvested I the fruits of my five-fold fields</i>
En hebber sachtjens soo mijn' schure mé gevult,	<i>And gradually filled my storage barns with them,</i>
Dat, klaegd' ick van gebreck, het waer' mijn' eigen schuld.	<i>So that if I complained of shortage it would be my fault.</i>
Wat isser? 'kstaeder meer beschaemt in als verwondert,	<i>What's there? I notice with humility rather than surprise</i>
Den hoop is weinigh min als bij drij mael drij hondert.'	<i>My crop is nearly three times three- hundred pieces.</i>

It does seem that Huygens was something of a child prodigy on the lute. When only eleven he was asked to play for a group of Danish ambassadors, and in 1610 he was allowed to sing and play for Tommaso Contarini, the Venetian ambassador; who, incidentally, had also been treated to Joachim van den Hove's playing. Constantijn hoped for a handsome handout from the distinguished gentleman, but after a while the highest string suddenly snapped, whereupon the ambassador packed it in and left. Constantijn, too, slunk off, 'bathed in sweat', as he wrote to his father. In 1618, on his first diplomatic journey, Huygens played for King James I of England, who, although in no way a music lover, interrupted his card game several times to listen and even deigned to compliment Huygens on his playing. During his travels in England, Huygens immersed himself in the rich musical scene there and heard famous lutenists such as Nicholas Lanier and Jacques Gaultier.

Huygens kept on making music passionately until an advanced age (Plate 14). In 1672 he sent Lady Judith Killigrew, lady-in-waiting to the Queen of England, some of his lute compositions to show that he was still possessed of the 'mad musical humour' of which he would not be cured until he breathed his last. He saw music as a diversion from his customary occupation, as he wrote in 1673 to Utricia Ogle, his musical friend of long standing: 'After, and many times between business belonging to my employment, I use, as I did, to fiddle myself out of a bad humour, either upon a viol, or a lute, or a theorba or a paire of virginals, which in my cabinet I doe find still ready about me'. In his autobiography of 1678 he wrote: 'As far as touch is concerned, the elegant suppleness when playing the lute is present not less, but even more, if I may say so, than in my youth, unless delusions are getting the better of me.' Eight years later, however, when he was 90, he wrote with regret to his friend Diego Duarte that the ever recurrent attacks of gout had so much weakened his fingers that he could no longer play as well as he wished the over 800



Huygens' report of a musical gathering during his third English journey (1623), at the home of Sir Robert Killigrew:

How often did we not enjoy music! Which of Apollo's arts have we not been allowed to taste! That whole house was one concert. The ravishing hostess, mother of (it still surprises me) a dozen children, with her snow-white throat treated us to divine singing, while accompanying her heavenly songs on the lute as if the Thracian hand itself touched the strings. When she took a rest and the Orpheus of the British, Lanier, was tempted into giving a sample of his singing and playing, many people were struck with silent awe, but in me it caused a most delicious shiver that I could not bear for very long. Even French or Italian people who have every heard his music, must have been openly ashamed of themselves and must have wanted to learn their own art from this master. The one to continue the feast (and how!) was Gaultier. The name only should be enough to underline his greatness sufficiently, were it not that, in the opinion of the English and without objections on my part, he has raised himself above the Gaultiers. Heavenly Gods! With what passionate hands, right and left, did he succeed in lifting me out of my senses again and again. Was that a lute inspired by a god, or was it the work and the enthusiasm of a human being after all? Even though I was a quacking goose among all those elegant swans, my contribution (who will believe it?) was not altogether scorned. Mules that itch rub themselves against each other in turn. In any case I did not go without praise from that company of laureates.

(Huygens, *Mijn leven verteld aan mijn kinderen in twee boeken*, pp 127-129).

shorter and longer pieces on the five instruments he had mastered. Only on the theorbo could he play an accompaniment in such a way 'that, as the saying goes, a drunken peasant couldn't hear the shortcomings'.

Music played an important part in the gatherings of family and friends, and Huygens will have enjoyed accompanying singing ladies on his theorbo: 'the improvised and ever varied accompaniment of a good voice, which people think that I am knowledgeable about'. His fondness of music of his own invention urged him to work out his improvisations and to write them down on paper so that he was in fact composing lute music. In company, he was always happy to perform his own compositions on one of his instruments, as we read in *Cluijs-Werck*:

Als lust van Tafelen en Praet-lust moede  
waeren,  
Brocht ick mijn poppegoed van  
Vijfderhande snaeren  
Bij beurten voordien daghe; hoe 't slecht of  
goed moght zijn,  
't En was geen Backers deegh, 'twas Huijs-  
back, en heel mijn.'

*When we were weary of dining and of  
conversation  
I got my toys, my five string instruments out  
In turn; and whether the music was good or not  
It wasn't from the baker's, it was home-made, all  
my own.*

We know from the table of contents of his later works in a manuscript now lost, that those compositions were mostly the short, stylised dances then popular in art music: allemandes, courantes, galliades, sarabandes, et cetera. Like many of his poems, they came with the date and place of composition and, like his poems, his musical ideas would have come to him in quick succession and been hurriedly written down. At the end of his life he mentioned with some pride that he had hundreds of compositions to his name. Sometimes he mentions the number 800, at other times 900. In a letter to the famous Southern Netherlands lutenist Jacques de Saint-Luc, written in 1676, he sums up his compositions: besides 75 works for theorbo, works for the ‘two kinds of lutes’ (that is to say: in old and new tuning), the harpsichord, the viola da gamba ‘and, may it please God, the guitar; the total amounting to 769 compositions’. Furthermore, he made compositions for voice and theorbo (published in his *Pathodia*, to be discussed later on), for consorts of viols, and for three bass viols in unison. In the same letter he asks Saint-Luc for advice about the right number of bars in courantes; he sees long ones and short ones among them, ‘and I think they all lend themselves to dancing to them’. He himself always composed pieces with twelve bars per section, with the exception of gigue and sarabandes. He had used to not include the last bar in the count, but now he felt that an even number of bars per section was best, even though he had noticed that many masters took little account of it. This worry about formalities is probably characteristic of the amateur composer Huygens.

It is striking that at first, Huygens never referred to his musical compositions in his correspondence, whereas he repeatedly mentioned them from the late 1640s onwards. Then, he also started sending his ‘sweet nothings’ to musicians abroad; he was clearly proud of his efforts. The letters written by him and to him have been published by Rudolf Rasch. They show that Huygens corresponded with eminent musicians such as the harpsichordist Johann Jacob Froberger, and the lutenists Jacques Gaultier, Nicholas Lanier and Jacques de Saint-Luc, mentioned above. While staying in Paris he was in contact with the lutenist François Dufaut, a man he much admired and to whom he played some of his own work.

Huygens occasionally tried to elicit a judgement about his compositions from his correspondents. He would send them some of his pieces, and the recipients were bound by good manners to comment on them. Apparently they were not all equally enthusiastic. In one of Huygens’ manuscripts with lute music which is now lost, a letter from Saint-Luc had been stuck in the front, which said that he had played the pieces through at leisure, and that in his opinion they were all good, and made according to the rules of composition. This sounds a little prim, but he continued to say that he could state without exaggeration that there was no one, not even in France, who could equal Huygens in this respect. Huygens was pleased with this judgement and proudly pasted the letter into his book.

This letter was a reaction to a message from Huygens to Saint-Luc dated 13 July 1673, which he had sent as an accompaniment to a parcel of some twenty of his lute compositions. The same letter informs us that Huygens collected his compositions in books per instrument, and that he also had manuscripts for harpsichord, viol, theorbo and guitar. In May 1674 Huygens sent Saint-Luc another collection of music: three dozen pieces in the key of ‘D with a flat and



Antonie van der Does, after Gerard Seghers, *Portrait of Jacques de Saint-Luc*. Engraving, 1641

D without flat and in G without flat'; he also announces a further despatch of works in six other keys. He also claims to have compositions 'in the same order of keys and a similar wealth of ideas for harpsichord, viola da gamba, theorbo and guitar'. He goes on to draw Saint-Luc's special attention to his transcription of a gigue by the late great Froberger; it is the only piece he knows by heart. Huygens also writes that he feels isolated in Holland with respect to his musical taste and qualities; there are people in his circle who admire his compositions, but there is no one who is really knowledgeable about music. In a letter to Saint-Luc from 1676 he complains again about the Dutch musical culture, especially about the lack of good music at the Stadholder's court.

Huygens was only in touch with professional musicians abroad. It is almost as if he looked down on the musicians in the Republic, who were either in the service of the council or freelance professional musicians. It was the musicians at the German and English courts, but particularly those at the French court, whose opinion he valued and requested. It cannot be coincidence that Huygens' library, which obviously included a large collection of music books, contained hardly any Dutch lute music; he did possess a work by Emanuel Adriaenssen, but the publications of Van den Hove and Vallet are conspicuously absent.

Also of some importance is Huygens' correspondence about various aspects of music theory with the Haarlem priest Joan Albert Ban. Ban was a passionate advocate of a strictly rational style of composing, in which the text dictated the duration and the pitch of the notes. Via Huygens these ideas were proposed to the famous music theoretician Father Marin Mersenne and the composer Antoine Boësset, neither of whom were charmed by the idea. In this exchange Huygens himself was a slightly amused intermediary, who from time to time tried to soothe the mounting emotions. We infer from Ban's letters, by the way, that he played the lute or at least possessed one. He wrote to Huygens how Antoine Robert, chapel master of the Queen of England, had come to see him, and that they had discussed subjects of music theory, partly illustrated on the lute, which Robert played expertly. Both men improvised on a French text; Antoine Robert sang it while accompanying himself on the lute.

Huygens was also involved in the discussions around a long-drawn-out controversy in the Republic: whether the congregational singing during services in the Reformed Church should be allowed to be accompanied by the organ. Since the Reformation, the organ, which Calvin had termed 'the Prince of Darkness', had been banned from the church – at least from the service; the municipal authorities, owners of the instruments, did not allow them to be physically removed. In the course of the 17th century many people began to be irritated by the abominable singing by the faithful of often unknown French melodies from the Geneva Psalter, so that more and more requests were heard for a reintroduction of the organ as accompaniment. This was, of course, a thorn in the eye of quibblers, so that in the already polarised politico-religious climate of the day, feelings once again ran high. Huygens, a deeply devout man, involved himself in the fray with his pamphlet *Gebruyck of ongebruyck van 't orgel in de kercken der Vereenighde Nederlanden* (Leiden 1641) [Use or disuse of the organ in the churches of the United Netherlands], in which he pleaded for reinstating organ-playing.

As far as his music goes, Constantijn Huygens is now mainly remembered for the only sizeable volume of music of his that remains: *Pathodia sacra et profana occupati*, published in 1647 by Robert Ballard in Paris. The title is rather cryptic: 'Spiritual and worldly *Pathodia* of a busy man', in which the title word *Pathodia* is a neologism by Huygens that should be interpreted as a contraction of the Greek words 'pathos' (feeling, passion) and 'odè' (song). The 'busy man' in the title is not mentioned by name, but it was hardly a secret that Huygens was the author. The dedication, to Huygens' good friend Utricia Ogle, was signed with his motto 'Constanter', and after the book had appeared the proud author gave many a copy to friends and high-ranking connections. In the accompanying letters to the latter he kept stressing that the book was the product of an amateur's quill and, of course, not the work of professional musician; if he had been one, he would certainly have mentioned his name. The volume contains 39 compositions for voice and figured bass: twenty Latin psalms and nineteen *airs*, twelve of which are in Italian and seven in French. We gather from his correspondence that Huygens had probably been working on the music since 1640. He originally delivered the composition with a written-out lute tablature as the accompanying part; the music indicates that Huygens wrote the accompaniment for a twelve-course the-



Dirk (Theodoor) Matham, *Vanitas*. Engraving, 1622. The open music book shows a two-part vocal composition by Joan Albert Ban. The text says: 'All things human hang by a silken thread, and through a sudden fall what was strong collapses'. The fingerboard of the accurately depicted cittern, with its whole and half frets, is in mirror image

orboed lute. But the publisher wanted to have a figured bass, because then it could also be played on a theorbo or a harpsichord. The tablature was converted to a figured bass in Paris by the court chapel master Thomas Gobert, who praised the quality of the music in a letter to Mersenne. In his introduction, Huygens addresses the people who are going to perform his music and asks them to apply *ritardandi* 'with controlled flexibility' when the melody as composed demands it.

Huygens' correspondence shows that he had other volumes of his own compositions published after 1647, but they are all lost. One of them was a new edition of the *Pathodia*, this time set for three voices and theorbo accompaniment, which Huygens mentions in a travel report from 1656, saying that it was being printed in Paris. In a letter to Utricia Ogle in January 1658, Huygens mentions the title of that work: *Psaumes et autres Aires recitatives à trois, avec la Basse continue par Constantin Huygens*. So he did publish the second edition under his own name.

Huygens' lifelong love for the lute is expressed again and again in his literary works, which often contain autobiographical elements. His long poem *Uytwanderingh van den ... Augusti tot den ... September 1669*, in which he describes a journey of several weeks through the provinces of Hol-



# PATHODIA SACRA, ET PROFANA OCCVPATI.



PARISIIS,  
Ex Officina ROBERTI BALLARD, vnici Regiæ Musicæ  
Typographi.

M. DC. XLVII.  
CVM PRIVILEGIO REGIS.



Title page of Constantijn Huygens' *Pathodia sacra et profana* (Paris 1647)



land and Utrecht, opens with the words ‘Two mares before my carriage, two servants, a dog, a lute; in that undistinguished company I left home’ (*Twee Meeren voor mijn’ Koets, twee Knechts, een Hond, een’ Luyt; / Met die onnoos’le sleep trock ick ten huysen uyt*). He did not need much on his journey, but his lute was an indispensable part of his minimalist luggage. In a letter to Henri de Beringhen from 1675, he described a fraught business trip to Zeeland and Zeeland Flanders, most of it on a barge, when he was in the company of books and of ‘the best lute in the world’, which he took with him wherever he went.

Occasionally he sings the praises of the lute outright, like in the poem *Iet boerighs. Aen den vryheere van Asperen, aengaende Joff. Anna Visscher* [Something rustic. To the Baron of Asperen, concerning Miss Anna Visscher];

[...]

Luyt, getuyge van mijn tranen,  
Luyt, getuyge van mijn’ vreughd,  
Van mijn’ onbevleekte Jeughd;  
Luyt, toekomende verblijden  
(Emmers wilt den Hemel lijden)  
Van mijn’ dorren ouderdom

[...]

*Lute, witness of my tears  
Lute, witness of my joy  
And of my innocent youth;  
Lute, joy yet to come  
(if Heaven will allow it)  
in my withered old age*

In his better-known poem *D’uytlandige herder* [The shepherd in foreign parts], written in 1622 while he was staying in England and heard the bad news about the siege of Bergen-op-Zoom, he poses as a shepherd who urges his lute to exchange cheerful tunes for sad melodies. He takes time to describe the instrument poetically:

[...]

Over sijn’ gekruyste kuyten  
Lagh sijn’ Haegsche’ Herder-tromp,  
Sijn’ volmaecktheit van geluyten,  
Sijn’ beruchte rammel romp,  
Sijn’ bespraecte schapen darmen,  
Sijn’ van ouds verechte bruyd,  
Sijn behaegelickst omarmen,  
Sijn beval, sijn boel, sijn’ Luyt.

[...]

*On his crossed-over legs  
Lay his shepherd’s horn from The Hague,  
Its perfection of sounds,  
Its well-known rickety corpus,  
Its eloquent sheep guts,  
His bride of so many years,  
His sweetest embrace,  
His grace, his love: his lute.*

In some poems the lute is used to make fun of other people’s idiosyncrasies, and these tell us something about the way people in the 17th century thought that the instrument should be played. In any case one should not pull funny faces, as Nicolaes Vallet instructs us in his short

Instruction for the lute. Huygens, true gentleman that he is, also feels that this is out of order and tells us so in his *Aen Wilhem* [To William]:

Uw lamme Luyt-spel, Wilm, ver- selschapt ghij soo dicht	<i>Your lousy lute-playing, William, you so often combine</i>
Met grouwelyck vertreck van mond en van gesicht,	<i>With pulling a disgusting face and mouth,</i>
Dat ick u niet en kenn als 'tuijt is, hoe ick 't wende;	<i>That I don't recognise you afterwards, though I try;</i>
En ken ick u in 'tlest, 'kwild' ick u niet en kende.	<i>And when I did know you again, I wish it wasn't so.</i>

In another poem, called *Luythandel* [Handling a lute], he plays around with the word *luitslager*, then the common word for a lutenist; he tells people who deserve the name *slager* [striker] to rather play their lute as if it were a woman, with kindness, without force:

Luijtslagers, bars geslacht, die maer u selfs behaegt	<i>Lute-strikers, rough lot, out to please yourselves</i>
En my en kundiger ons' ooren light en plaeght,	<i>Yet you so offend my ears and those of expert folk,</i>
Wel hebt ghij Slagers naem verdient en wel bekomen.	<i>You well deserve to have the name of striker;</i>
'Ksie op mijn' arme Luyt met schrick uw' vuijsten komen.	<i>I'm shocked to see your fists land on my poor lute.</i>
Maer, wilt gh' een less van mij verstaen,	<i>But if you will take a lesson from me,</i>
Ick sal uw' handen leeren gaen, Als handen die maer dunne darmen	<i>I will teach your hands to move Like hands that touch the slender strings</i>
Met Vingeren, en niet met armen, Te roeren hebben, en 't geluijd Te locken uijt een' stomme Luijt.	<i>With fingers, not with the whole arm In order to coax a sound, From a dumb lute.</i>
Ghij kunt u beter niet besinnen, Als letten op der Vrouwen Spinnen: Haer' rechter Hand doet al 'tgeweld	<i>You cannot do better than to think Of how women spin at the wheel: Their right hand provides the force</i>
Dat heel het werck te wercke stelt. Maer 'tWiel hard om en om te slingren	<i>That sets the thing in motion. But the quick turning of the spinning wheel</i>
En doet niet goeds: het zijn de ving'ren	<i>Is not the point; it is the fingers</i>

En 'twerck van d' ander hand om hoog	<i>And the upward movement of the other hand</i>
Daer aen gedurigh spinsters oogh	<i>That the spinning woman has to watch</i>
Met alle aendachticheit moet kleven,	<i>And that she gives all her attention;</i>
En, naer haer sacht en spoedigh leven	<i>In harmony with that quick, gentle motion</i>
Moet dan de Wiel-hand oock,	<i>The hand that moves the wheel must</i>
wel trecken, maer niet slaen.	<i>pull, not strike.</i>
Kort om, Eenpaericheit, daerop komt alles aen.	<i>In brief, coordination is what it's all about.</i>
Luytslagers, sonder uw' vernuften veel te slijpen,	<i>Lutenists, even without exerting your mind too much</i>
Ick weet ghij lichtelyck mijn meening sult begrijpen,	<i>I know you will easily understand what I mean;</i>
En handelen uw' Luijt, rein-snaerigh opgestelt,	<i>Treat your lute, strung with purest strings,</i>
Als of 't een Ioffer waer, met vriendschap, geen geweld.	<i>As if she were a maid: in friendship, not with force.</i>

On the one hand, this is a poem about the right way to play the lute, but at the same time the erotic overtones are clear: the lute is represented as a woman played on by a man. We will come across this theme repeatedly; both in literature and in the visual arts, the lute is often used as a metaphor, capable of symbolising many different concepts.

After Huygens' death on 28 March 1687 his richly stocked library was divided among his three sons, as he had laid down in his will. The collection contained many editions of music, as well as works on music theory. There were also a number of lute books, though not in abundance. They are French editions, some of them for voice and lute, including Besard's *Thesaurus harmonicus* of 1603. Most of the titles are hard to place, such as the otherwise unknown *Tablature du Luth par du Faut*; it may have been a manuscript. There is also a book of guitar music by Corbetta. Then there is one single book (or manuscript?) with Italian lute music, and only a single publication by a lutenist from the Netherlands, and he was from the Southern Netherlands: Adriaenssen's *Pratum musicum* (1584, reprinted 1600). Another source tells us that Huygens possessed around 200 manuscripts with music. His sons were obviously not very interested in their father's intellectual and artistic legacy, because on 15 March 1689, Huygens' library was sold by auction.

For his collection of music manuscripts, Huygens had made precise arrangements: 'as far as my numerous musical compositions of all kinds are concerned, and what I have collected from others, I trust that the brothers will kindly leave it to my son Christiaan, whom I urgently request to keep it all together and cherish it, without disposing of anything I have written with my own hand, apart from the copies I had carefully made, because I think he will from time to time be

asked for such copies' (*wat aengaet mijne menighvuldige compositien in allerhande soorte van musique, ende wat ik van die materie van anderen hebben vergaedert, vertrouwwe ick dat de broeders gaeren sullen laeten volgen aen mijnen sone Christiaen, dien ick recommandere alles bij een ende in eeren te houden, sonder alienatie van ijets van mijne handt, anders dan by copien, die ick curieuselijck heb doen afschrijven, gelovende dat hij daerom somtijts sal koomen aengesocht te werden*). Huygens was clearly very concerned about the collection of his own compositions, which, as we have seen before, had been collected in different handwritten books. He told Christiaan to keep the collection together, because he thought there might be interest in it. This provision shows that Huygens also had a collection of handwritten music by others.

Alas, in spite of these explicit precautions, Huygens' musical manuscripts are now lost. Three volumes, with his own lute music, were found by Pieter de la Ruë in a bookshop in Middelburg in 1738, and he eventually bought them; more about this in another chapter. But since then, nothing has been heard of them.



## CHAPTER 6

### Lute Music

In the Golden Age the reputation of lutenists and other musicians would have been based mainly on their virtuosity, meaning both their skills as instrumentalists and their ability to improvise with convincing musicality. The practice of musicians was built largely around improvisation. At weddings and parties they would have played mainly dances, which were often based on a fixed harmonic pattern, or at least a fixed rhythmic outline, that provided musicians with an adequate framework for giving shape to musical ideas on the spot. In the case of aubades or private concerts, the repertoire may have consisted more of intabulations, settings for lute of well-known vocal works, and variations on popular tunes. Sweelinck, for instance, is known to have entertained his friends one evening with no fewer than 25 variations on the song *De lustelijke mei* [The lusty May]. It is not known whether Sweelinck ever noted down those ideas, but even if he did so, the work has not survived.

The pride musicians took in this skill is shown by the fact that they sometimes refer to it explicitly in improvisations that *are* written down. For instance, Vallet ‘signed’ a notarial deed with a two-part improvised canon (*Canon Ex tempore A deux*). And we have a toccata in Van den Hove’s own hand that he improvised on 14 July 1615 (*Joachim Vanden Hove Extempore Fecit Anno 1615 14-7*). Although not a professional musician, Constantijn Huygens prides himself in his autobiography that soon after getting the hang of the lute, he could successfully ‘give free rein to my own aptitude and improvisational skills. This allowed me to play music nobody had ever heard before and which welled up within me with ease’. The majority of such improvisations, and therefore most of the instrumental music played at the time, would never have been written down.





Vallet, *Canon Extempore a deux*. Amsterdam City Archives, Notarial Archive, inv. no. 360B, f. 571r, deed of 6 October 1616



Van den Hove, end of *Toccata Extempore*, dated 14 July 1615. Berlin, Ms. Hove-1, f. 44r

A few centuries later, we modern music-lovers can only judge the 17th-century musicians on the basis of the works they actually wrote down, and which have also had the good fortune to survive. Many lutenists (to restrict ourselves to these musicians again) would have written down their music fairly regularly, for example when giving lessons to their pupils, in order to provide them with study material. Some of these lute pupils, university students for instance, would have later moved on to another teacher and thus built up a collection of musical works by several lutenists, as well as exchanging pieces with other students. It would appear that many lute manuscripts from around 1600 can be traced back to such student books, which are often filled with an international repertoire.

It is also conceivable that in their daily practice of lessons and performances, professional musicians kept a 'notebook' of ideas, sketches for pieces, and harmonic patterns on which to improvise, as well as more detailed compositions. Given the personal and fleeting nature of such

manuscripts, it is not surprising that they do not appear to have been handed down very often. We will see, however, that in the case of Joachim van den Hove we do, in fact, possess such a musician's notebook. And it is likely that lutenists also made the occasional 'neat' manuscript of their own compositions, to give to other people as a present or to dedicate to them, although hardly any have survived. Once again, it is Joachim van den Hove who forms the exception to this rule, and whose neatly executed manuscript we still have today.

All in all, it is likely that most professional lutenists, who would all have given lessons as well, would have been represented in the many manuscripts that were in circulation. The majority of European lute literature has been handed down in this form, and the rich English corpus of lute music survives virtually exclusively in manuscripts. In the Dutch Republic, too, there must have been numerous manuscripts of lute music, although precious few remain. Such manuscripts were often inconsequential little books for everyday use, and when the lute went out of fashion in the course of time, and tablature notation was no longer understood, most of them would have been thrown away or otherwise lost. As a consequence, we have little or no knowledge of the work of nearly all the lutenists we know by name, such as those discussed earlier. We know just a few works by one or two lutenists, but from most of them not a single note has been handed down to us.

### *The Thysius Lute Book*

The fact that we still have, by way of exception, a handful of works by the Leiden lute players Marten Persijn and David Janszoon Padbrué is thanks to one of the few surviving lute manuscripts from the Northern Netherlands, namely the famous Thysius Lute Book. This is a hefty folio (30.5 by 20.5 cm) with 522 folia (i.e. 1,044 pages), making it the thickest lute manuscript in the world.

The pages are pre-printed with seven-line staves, on which French lute tablature was notated. Although many pages have not been written on, the book contains a respectable total of 907 pieces of music. The pieces are ordered thematically, often with many blank pages in between the sections. The book still has its original pigskin cover, decorated with an embossed frame of two double lines with small roses and fleurs-de-lis embossed in the corners. In the middle there is a central panel with a lozenge-shaped ornament in the centre and eight smaller, floral decorative figures in the corners.

The Thysius Lute Book was first studied by Jan Pieter Nicolaas Land (1834-1897), professor of philosophy at Leiden, at a time when there was little interest in lute music. He named the manuscript after a previous owner, Jan Thijs (1622-1653), who in the fashion of his day had Latinised his name to Johannes Thysius (Plate 15). He was the son of a rich Amsterdam merchant originating from the Southern Netherlands. In 1634, following the death of his parents, he moved to Leiden where he lived in the house of his uncle Constantijn l'Empereur (1598-1648), who was a professor of Hebrew and theology at the university. Following his education at the Latin school, Thysius studied at the faculty of law at Leiden University. He then left on a Grand Tour



Cover of the Thysius Lute Book. Leiden, Bibliotheca Thysiana, 1666

of England and France, which lasted for eighteen months. On his return to Leiden, he obtained his doctorate and was all set to start a career in society, but before he could commence, he died at the age of just 31.

Thysius left behind an extensive library, and from its composition we can see that he was also interested in music, although perhaps more as a collector than as a player. He also owned several musical instruments, including a lute. His surviving cashbook shows that in 1648 he bought an instrument from the builder Laux Maler from Bologna, for 80 guilders. That was a great deal of money, although we will see that Constantijn Huygens had to pay even more for a Maler lute.

Whether Thysius could actually play his precious Maler is highly doubtful. A letter from his friend Job Ludolf points to the opposite. On 18 May 1650, Ludolf wrote from Stockholm that he had cherished the idea of re-stringing Thysius' lute in case a friend was inclined to play it – evidently Thysius himself was not able to string the lute, nor could he play it. Ludolf expresses his gratitude for the fact that he had been allowed to play the lute, which would only make sense in the case of a rare and costly instrument such as a Laux Maler. Besides the lute, Thysius also had an equally expensive harpsichord by the famous Antwerp builder Andreas Ruckers, and a whole series of stringed instruments, comprising four violins, four *pochettes* (dancing master's fiddles) and five viols, some of them by the Leiden builder Andries Asseling, as well as Parisian builders such as Prevot and Pierre de Duck. The three costly viols by father and son John Rose from Bridewell in England are remarkable examples. Incidentally, an instrument maker called Jan Roos was living in Amsterdam in the 1580s.

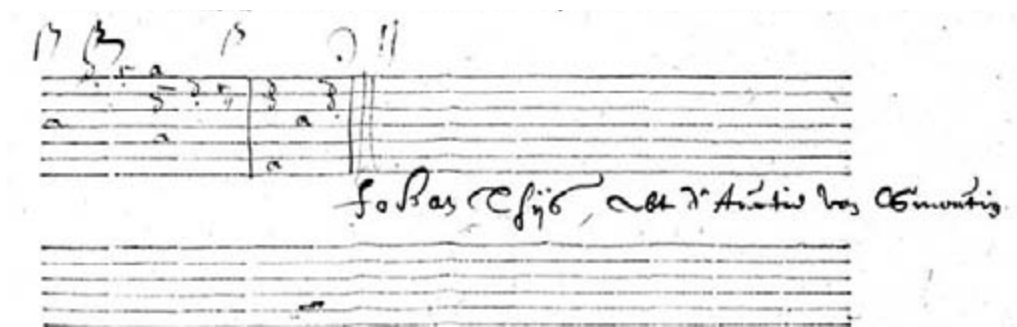
On Thysius' premature death in 1653, it turned out that he had stipulated in his will that his collection of books was to be used *tot publicque dienst der studie* (for public service of study); in other words, as a public library, which was a remarkable gesture in those days. To that purpose a new house was built on the corner of Rapenburg and Groen hazengracht in Leiden, which was completed as early as 1655. The total cost of the construction and furnishing of the house amounted to the then considerable sum of 14,500 guilders. Since then, the building, the interior and the collection have remained largely unchanged, so that the Bibliotheca Thysiana survives as a historical monument of the highest order. Like a time machine, it transports us back to the mid-17th century, due to the unique unity of the building (a good example of Dutch Classicism), the interior with the bookcases and the very rare wooden book carousel (probably bought by Thysius himself), and finally, of course, the collection itself: a complete 17th-century private library that gives an impression of the books collected by a young, learned book-lover from the period of late Humanism. Incidentally, part of the reason for the building and collection being so well preserved is that their use has always been limited, since the library has led a fairly dormant existence over the centuries. It is thanks to this library that the Thysius Lute Book has withstood the ravages of time, unlike many other manuscripts of lute music that must undoubtedly have existed in the Netherlands.

Though the name suggests otherwise, the Thysius Lute Book was not written by Thysius himself. From his accounts we know that he only acquired it in 1648, from the sale of books owned by his deceased uncle Constantijn l'Empereur. He acquired several lute books from this sale, including editions by Vallet and Laelius. For the sum of one guilder, Thysius also bought a *Tablateur in fol. met 7 linien vol geschreven* [Tablature book in folio with seven-line staves, completely filled with writing]. This was the same book described in l'Empereur's auction catalogue (which contained no fewer than 23 lots of music books) as a *Tablateur voor de Luyt met seven linien* [Tablature for the Lute with seven lines]. It is more or less certain that this is our lute book, as the music in Thysius is written on seven lines; a highly unusual phenomenon in lute tablature, which is usually notated on six lines.

And neither was L'Empereur the creator of the lute book. We know where the manuscript came from before he acquired it, thanks to a note written by Thysius at the bottom of the first page of the book, which reads *Johan Thijs wt d'auctie van Smoutius* [Johan Thijs from the auction of Smoutius]. So the manuscript originally came from the sale of the estate of a certain Smoutius. Land identified this person as the well-known clergyman Adriaen Joriszoon Smout, and took him to be the compiler and first owner of the manuscript. Rightly so, as it turned out recently, as the handwriting in the lute book is identical to that in a letter written by Smout in 1632, which is in the Amsterdam City Archives.

This discovery was made in the course of a detailed palaeographic analysis of the book, which ascertained that the whole work was written by one and the same person – i.e. Smout – and not, as previous researchers thought, by three or four different hands. The differences in writing came about because Smout kept adding pieces to the book over a long time, in three very distinct periods of his life. The pieces from the first period are written for a six- or seven-course lute, while the music from the later periods requires a ten-course instrument. This corresponds exactly to the early 17th-century development of the lute, to which several bass strings were added over a short period of time. The later writing then dates from that period.

The biography of Adriaen Smout gives further information about the creation of his lute book and enables a more precise dating of the three phases. Smout was born in Rotterdam in 1578 or 1579, the eldest son of Joris Adriaenszoon Smout and Geertruid Cornelisdochter van Tetrode. The young Adriaen would first have attended the Latin school in his hometown and continued his education at the *gymnasium* in Stade, in Northern Germany. He then enrolled at the philosophical faculty of Leiden University on 12 April 1595, at the age of sixteen. His studies progressed well and in 1600 he obtained the title *magister artium liberalium*. In October 1601 the University Board granted him permission to give special unpaid lectures in logic, but they were not popular with the students, who disrupted the lessons on at least four occasions and pelted him with snowballs in the street. In February 1602, he stepped down as a lecturer, leaving the university without the testimonial and letter of reference he had requested. Apparently, the University Board was not too happy with his brief performance either.



Thysius Lute Book, f. 11, note by Thysius about the acquisition of the book

Smout returned to Rotterdam, where he married Heyltje Jansdochter Hooft in 1602. As far as we know, the couple had one daughter, Geertruid, who was married in 1620 to Theodosius L'Empereur from Bremen (incidentally a younger brother of the aforementioned Constantijn L'Empereur). Smout, who would also have studied theology at Leiden, now embarked on a career as a minister and theologian, preaching in various places for brief periods. In the first two decades of the 17th century, Smout was highly active as a writer of books and pamphlets, in which he took part in the fervent theological polemics of the day. In his writings he positioned himself as a rigorous and intolerant advocate of the Contra-Remonstrant school. His publications led to his banishment in 1613 by the States of Holland to the small town of 's-Gravenzande, which he was not allowed to leave without permission. However, his luck turned in 1618, when the political situation changed radically and the Remonstrants in the local and county governing bodies were replaced by Counter-Remonstrants. Earlier decrees against Smout were revoked and he was once more eligible for public office. In 1620, he was appointed as a minister in Amsterdam.

Initially Smout fared well in the new political and religious climate, but after a while the ideological fervour of the political elite in Amsterdam lost its edge and the town councilors adopted a more tolerant attitude towards the Remonstrants and other religious minorities. Smout lost no time at all in protesting vociferously against this development. From 1622 onwards his diatribes from the pulpit against the lax city government became increasingly violent and demagogic. As a consequence of his sermons, riots broke out in 1626, in which two Counter-Remonstrant ringleaders were killed by the civic guard. From then on, Smout's comings and goings were watched by the Amsterdam authorities. But not wishing to tone down his tirades, he eventually overstepped the mark and was put on a barge and exiled from Amsterdam on 7 January 1630. This meant that he lost his salary as well, although he made continual attempts to have it paid out to him from 1636 up to his death.

After his exile from Amsterdam, Smout never ascended the pulpit again. After a brief stay in Leiden, where he registered with the university, he returned to his hometown of Rotterdam, where he lived until his death in 1646. His academic career took on some degree of glory when, on 19 March 1636, he was appointed by the town fathers to give public lectures in history at the Illustere School in Rotterdam. In these years, Smout also seems to have applied himself intensively to his literary and musical ambitions, which were once again in the service of religion. In 1630 or shortly thereafter, he appears to have made a verse adaptation of the Song of Songs, which was intended to be sung. According to a comment from 1634, Smout had expressed the erotic content too explicitly in some of the lines he had sent to the literary celebrity of the day, Maria Tesselschade Roemers Visscher: the preacher Adriaen Smout had composed some poems on Solomon's Song of Songs, and presented them to Tesselschade, but she found the spiritual meaning expressed in such physical terms that she would be ashamed to sing such songs in polite company, or as the original has it: *Den predikant Adriaen Smout had over het Hooglied van Salomon eenige liederen gedicht, en aen Tesselschade gegeven; maer zij vond er den geestelijken zin met zulke vleeschelijke woorden uitgeduidt, dat se zig schaemden zulke zangen voor eerlijke ooren te zingen.* Smout continued with his adaptation and translation of sacred texts, presenting a new transla-



tion of the Psalms to the Synods of North and South Holland in 1644, described as the *Psalmen Davids na de reghelen der musijcke op rijm ghestelt* [the Psalms of David, set to rhyme along the rules of music]. Like the Song of Songs, this adaptation was evidently intended to be sung. This verse translation of the psalms was never published, however, and the text seems to be lost. Smout's Lute Book probably contains some rhymed versions by his own hand. Some of the psalm texts in it are improvements on the then current verse translation by Petrus Dathenus, from 1566, while others are totally different. In this period, Smout must also have been active in other areas as a writer, as in 1645 the Synod of South Holland approved some of his writings in the fields of theology, philosophy and history, both in Dutch and in Latin.

Adriaen Smout died on 18 February 1646. After his death, his books were sold, and the surviving auction catalogue, listing 2,723 items in total, shows that he possessed an extensive library, so he must have been a man of means. The collection reflects the fact that Smout was a man of wide intellectual and cultural interests, despite his fundamentalist orthodox Calvinist attitude. Apart from many theological books, his library contained a number of legal and medical works, as well as a large and varied 'miscellaneous' section, which included works of philosophy, history and literature. Then there are a number of categories arranged by language: Spanish and Italian, French, English, German and Dutch, including well-known Dutch and international authors and playwrights, such as Ariosto, Lope da Vega, Rabelais, Petrarch, Hooft, Marnix, Grotius, Coornhert and Revius, alongside a selection of theological and historical works, travelogues, psalm books and songbooks, et cetera. The last section of the library catalogue lists 31 lots of music books, mostly of vocal works by leading composers like Crecquillon, De Castro, Pevernage, Philips and Verdonck, as well as some printed lute books, namely *Florida* by Van den Hove, *Paradisus musicus Testudinis* by Vallet and the editions by Denss and Laelius. Under item 11 it says *Versheyden geschreven musiick stucken bestaende in 5 boecken* [Various handwritten pieces of music consisting of 5 books], and one of those five manuscripts will have been his Lute Book.

How did Smout arrange his lute book? The table on page 97 clearly shows that he worked systematically. In the manuscript as we see it today, there is a rough tripartite division: first, serious secular music, followed by sacred compositions – mostly psalms – and finally light-hearted, secular songs and dances. In brief: art music, church music and popular music. The table shows that the serious secular music comprises mainly Italian dance forms such as galliards, passamezzi and pavaues, written down with variations and in different keys. These are followed by a small number of fantasies and numerous intabulations of polyphonic music. The list is headed by French chansons and Italian madrigals, followed by Latin motets and some polyphonic sacred pieces in Dutch. The motets form a transition to the second part, which comprises Calvinist hymns and psalms. Not all 150 psalms are represented; only the most popular ones. In principle, they were notated in numerical order and were followed by biblical hymns that were also printed immediately after the psalms in other contemporary psalm books. The sacred section concludes with some favourite songs of Roman Catholic origin, including Christmas songs. The final, popular section begins with Dutch secular songs, followed by French and English tunes. The manuscript

The arrangement of the Thysius Lute Book		
<i>ff.</i>		<i>Folia containing phase A*)</i>
<i>1-149v</i>	<i>Italian dances</i>	
1-3	La Chasse	1-3
4-38	Galliards	6-34
39-89	Passamezzo d'Italie (antico)	39-80
94-124	Passamezzo d'Hautbois (moderno)	94-122
127v-138	Other passamezzi	132-136
140-149	Pavanes	140-146
<i>156-160v</i>	<i>Fantasies</i>	156-157
<i>163-210</i>	<i>Intabulations of polyphonic music</i>	
163-181	French polyphonic chansons	163-170v; 180-181
182-190v	Italian madrigals	182-182v
191-205	French polyphonic chansons	191-193
205v-210	Italian madrigals	—
210v-223v	Latin motets	—
224v-226v	Dutch sacred polyphony	—
<i>233v-323</i>	<i>Psalms and canticles</i>	
233v-303	Psalms	237-292r
310-315v	Calvinist canticles	310, 315
317v-319	Polyphonic exercises and Sapphica	—
320-323v	Christmas songs	320-320v
<i>330-402v</i>	<i>Settings of ballads</i>	
330-360	Dutch ballads	330-359
365v-386v	French ballads and dances	368-386
387-402v	English ballads	387-396, 400-401v
<i>410-513</i>	<i>Western European dances</i>	
410-420	Dances with Dutch titles	410-418
426-440	Courantes	426-440
442-473v	Branles	442-471
474-513	Allemandes	474-513
517-518	Tables of intervals	—

\*) The folia in this column show the oldest script phase A, whether or not in combination with later phases.

ends with a series of dances, the first of which have Dutch titles. And right at the end there is a long series of French dances: courantes, branles and allemandes.

Within the tripartite structure, the pieces are grouped by genre, and the subsections are separated from one another by blank pages. In his earliest writing phase, Smout began with some of these subsections, which he probably first wrote in separate quires, each starting on the recto side of a quire. He then bound these quires, or had them bound. The fact that this was done early on is shown by the traces of intensive use of the book. He also ensured that there were large numbers of blank pages between the genres. Later, he used these blank pages to add pieces of music, which he wrote in the appropriate places: courantes with courantes, intabulations with intabulations, and so on. He also included many variations on pieces already in the book, which were placed as close to the original as possible. But despite all his precautions, he still ran out of space occasionally for his later additions. The psalms were a particular problem, as Smout wanted to keep them in order. This meant he was sometimes forced to take drastic measures, such as cutting out pages and sticking in others. In the case of the Italian madrigals and French chansons, the sections overlap one another somewhat.

The table also shows that particularly the secular popular music – settings of ballads and dances – was almost all written in the first phase, and nearly all the intabulations of Italian madrigals and of Latin and Dutch sacred polyphony at a later date. In the case of the serious secular music (Italian dances and fantasies) and the intabulations of French polyphonic chansons, early copies are supplemented by later ones. Combining these observations with Smout's biographical details, we can say with near certainty that Smout started his lute manuscript while studying in Leiden, that is, in the period between 1595 and 1600. The pieces he notated then were in his earliest script phase (phase A). This corresponds to the repertoire, as the popular tunes and dances of phase A are certainly more characteristic of the young student than of the orthodox clergyman he later became. Moreover, nearly all the pieces in the book by master Marten and master David, lutenists active in Leiden around the turn of the century, were written in this first script phase. So this first layer of the *Thysius Lute Book* is a typical student manuscript of the period.

After his studies, Smout continued to write in the book for the rest of his life, presumably with longer and shorter breaks in between. His much stricter philosophy of life is reflected in the more serious repertoire written in the two later script phases B and C. Most of the psalm settings belong to this period, for example. We can place the last phase, C, with the verse settings of the psalms and the *Song of Songs*, during his Rotterdam years, 1630–1646, when he was intensely occupied with these biblical texts. Period B must then have been somewhere between Smout's student years and his final years in Rotterdam. In view of the relatively big difference between the script of A and B on the one hand and C on the other, there may have been a period between B and C in which Smout did not work on the lute book. That could have been in the eventful 1620s, when he was a preacher in Amsterdam.

We will focus on the musical content of the *Thysius Lute Book* a moment longer, as some aspects merit our attention, even if only for the fact that they are so typical of all Dutch lute music of the period. To start with, it is striking that the great majority of the pieces are anonymous, i.e. no

composer's name has been written next to them. Often the intabulations of sacred and secular works do bear the name of the composer of the vocal original, but never that of the creator of the setting for lute. The purely instrumental pieces, the dances and settings of ballads, are nearly all anonymous. A handful of pieces give the name 'Master David' and 'Master Marten' as the author, and we saw earlier that they can probably be identified as the lutenists David Janszoon Padbrué and Marten Persijn in Leiden. But apart from that, very few pieces bear a composer's name. Indeed, it is very likely that Smout did not even know the authorship of most of the pieces he wrote down, as there was a lot of anonymous music in circulation among the students.

The Dutch lutenist most often named in the lute book, for a total of ten pieces, is master David Padbrué. Though this may seem to suggest that Smout took lessons from him, this would have been near-impossible, as master David had already left Leiden when Smout arrived there in 1595. According to his book inventory, however, Smout did possess a copy of Padbrué's *Psalmgeclanck*, a polyphonic vocal setting of the 150 psalms, published by Padbrué in Amsterdam in 1610.

The table of contents shows that the vast majority of music in the Thysius Lute Book originated outside the Netherlands. This reflects the musical situation in the region, where the lion's share of the repertoire had an international flavour, in the practice of both serious and popular music. Traditionally, the greatest influence came from France. In the Thysius Lute Book, the intabulations start with French chansons by Orlandus Lassus, Claudin de Sermisy, Thomas Crecquillon, Lupi Second, Pierre Sandrin, Guillaume Boni and others. It also includes French dances, such as numerous courantes, allemandes and branles, as well as voltas, gavottes and bourrées. There are also French songs, to which people in the Dutch Republic usually sang Dutch words. They belong to the popular repertoire of the period.

Another influence was that of Italy. Smout seems to have included only a few Italian madrigals to start with, but more than made up for this later on by adding lighter forms such as canzonets and villanelles. Most of them have been left anonymous, although some bear the names Giovanni da Palestrina, Luca Marenzio, Jacques van Berchem, Giovan Ferretti, Baldasaro Donato, Giovanni Giacomo Gastoldi, Bartolomeo Roy and Jean de Castro.

There is a remarkably large number of intabulations of Latin motets, which one would perhaps not expect in the lute book of a Calvinist. Smout included motets by Peter Philips, Pietro Lappi, Leone Leonis, Arcangelo Bussoni, Giulio Belli, Jacob Finetti and Giacomo Moro. With the intabulations of chansons, madrigals, motets and the Italian and French dances, the Thysius Lute Book conforms entirely to the tradition of the lute books of Phalèse and Adriaenssen from the Southern Netherlands.

The English influence in the Lute Book is a more recent one. John Dowland and John Johnson are particularly well represented with galliards and pavaues, but other Elizabethan lute masters have been included as well. The more popular genre is represented in the Lute Book by a number of ballad tunes and other English song melodies, sometimes called only *Engelsch Liedeken* [English Song] or something similar. It was also a popular custom in the Dutch Republic to sing Dutch words to English melodies. *Soet Robbertgen*, for example, is actually *Lord*

*Willoughby's Welcome Home*, and *The Cobbler* was sung on this side of the North Sea as *Het was een Engelsch boerken, schoenlappen soud' hy doen*. The popularity of English music in the Dutch Republic at the end of the 16th century was connected with the successful groups of actors that travelled via the Netherlands to Northern Germany and the Baltic region.

At first sight there seems to be hardly any German influence in the Lute Book. There are, however, quite a few older songs and dances with Dutch titles that we also know from German sources, especially from Northern Germany, such as *Hansken*, *Bruijnsmedelijn*, *Het soude een meysken melcken*, *Den Paltroek die staet*, *Doodendans* and *Studentendans*. These go back to an older, common, Low German folk culture. As far as the contemporary repertoire around 1600 is concerned, it was rather a case of Dutch poetry and music influencing that in Germany, partly because so many young Germans came to study at Leiden University. Songs and poems by Jacob Cats, Daniel Heinsius and Joost van den Vondel, for instance, were translated into German.

The Thysius Lute Book contains a large number of arrangements of Dutch songs, with or without common German roots. We already discussed the flourishing song culture in the Netherlands in the 16th and 17th centuries, in which the whole population took part. Dutch songs have been preserved in hundreds of small songbooks, where we find the words of well-known songs to which there are settings for lute in the Thysius manuscript, such as *Ick brengt mijn naeste ghebuer een dronck* [I drink to my neighbour], *Den tijt es hier* [The time has come], *Lieff uutvercoren, lieff triumphant* [Special love, triumphant love] and *Noch weet ick een casteel* [I know another castle]. Smout seems to have taken some songs from a repertoire more rooted in folk and oral tradition, which we do not come across in other songbooks or manuscripts, such as *Frans aen Floris* [Frans to Floris] and *Met dat schuijtgen al over dat meertgen* [with the boat across the lake], as well as a few vulgar songs like *Vrouken laet den spiering in* [Girl, let the eel in], *Lijskens oven is bestoven* [Lizzie's oven has been dusted] and *Soutmen niet moghen een reijsken pissen* [Can't we have a piss for awhile]. The Lute Book thus affords us a glimpse of a layer of popular culture we know very little about. Here we find, for instance, the melody of the song about *Gerrit van Velsen*. The song is about the murder of Count Floris V of Holland and was already 150 years old in Smout's days, when it regained popularity among the intelligentsia and formed the basis for the play *Geeraerd van Velsen* by P.C. Hooft (1613). The Thysius Lute Book is the only musical source to contain this historic song. The same is true for a great many other popular melodies, such as *Ick breng mijn naeste ghebuer een dronck* (mentioned above) and the song from Haarlem *Hier buyten inden houte* [Out in the woods called de Hout]. Unique pieces like these are partly why the Thysius Lute Book is considered so significant. Besides the Dutch songs there are also some folk dances, such as *Boeren dans* (which shows some similarities with *branles de champagne*) and *Schagervoetgen*.

The Thysius Lute Book shows that Calvinists were not averse to playing psalms on the lute even though the instrument was associated with worldly pursuits. Psalms were arranged for plucked instruments early on, and volumes of psalm settings for lute or cittern are known to have been published from 1552. The phenomenon was also seen in the Dutch Republic. In Arnhem in 1617, the German lutenist Daniel Laelius published a lute book with psalm settings, and Dutch lutenists

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*Almande Prince Parma.*

The musical score is written on ten staves. The first staff begins with a treble clef and a key signature of one sharp (F#). The notation is in a lute tablature style, using letters (P, B, D) and numbers (1, 2, 3, 4, 5) to indicate fret positions. The score is divided into measures by vertical bar lines. The handwriting is in a cursive, historical style. The piece concludes with a double bar line and the signature 'M. Marten'.

The Thysius Lute Book, f. 475r. *Almande Prince Parma*, by 'Master Marten' [Persijn]



kept their end up as well, as we will see later on in the discussion of Nicolaes Vallet's production. We have already mentioned that Marnix van Sint Aldegonde made psalm settings for lute. All in all, there was a lively tradition of playing psalms on the lute, sometimes to accompany singing.

Smout compiled a varied collection of psalm arrangements, based on a series of psalm settings in a characteristic style. The melody is invariably in the upper voice, which is the most ornamented part. In principle, the melody is accompanied by homophonic chords, the accompanying voices of which are sometimes linked with some sort of figuration. These arrangements seem to have been made especially for the lute, as they are idiomatically written and do full justice to the psalms on the lute. There are also numerous intabulations of polyphonic settings by Jan Pieterszoon Sweelinck, Claude Goudimel and Claude le Jeune, who all applied different techniques. In view of its rich chords and many corrections, the setting of psalm 5 ascribed to Jan Pieterszoon Sweelinck would appear to be a transcription, possibly of an arrangement for a keyboard instrument that has not survived. Two similar settings by Sweelinck of psalm 23 also give the impression of being transcriptions, even if they are slightly more idiomatic than psalm 5.

One interesting aspect of the Thysius Lute Book is the inclusion of several lute quartets; pieces for four lutes tuned to different pitches. Quite a number of pieces, mainly variations on ground basses like *Passamezzo d'Italie* (antico), *Passamezzo Hautbois* (moderno), *La Romanesca*, *Chi passa* and so on, occur in the book in four different pitches, indicated as *Superius*, *Contratenor*, *Tenor* and *Bassus*. Music for several lutes was a well-known phenomenon in the Netherlands. The influential book *Pratum musicum* by Emanuel Adriaenssen (1584), for instance, also contains lute trios and quartets. The tradition is continued with the famous lute quartets by Nicolas Vallet, in his *Secretum musarum*, part two (1616), and with two trios in Valerius' *Nederlandtsche gedenck-clanck* (1626).

When the four parts are played together, we notice some unacceptable things happening on a musical level (to our ears, at least). In the diminutions, there are parallel primes and octaves, fourths and fifths. There are also incompatible chords; for instance, major and minor chords, or different degrees of the scale. Yet this does not appear to have been a fundamental problem for the musicians of the time, as the short duration of the lute sound probably made it possible to tolerate dissonances. We see here that many liberties were permitted in improvisation. In fact, it was always possible to play different variations on a Renaissance bass at the same time, if one was prepared to put up with a little contrapuntal and harmonic inconvenience.

Another problem with the quartets in the Thysius Lute Book concerns the tuning of the lutes. From the tablature keys, we can deduce how the four lutes had to be tuned in relation to one another. As the intervals between the four are always a fourth or more, the Bassus and Superius would be so far apart that this would not be feasible, from the viewpoint of lute construction, as the Bassus would be too big and the Superius too small. The solution is to make the Bassus an octave higher and the Superius an octave lower. Strangely enough, the Bassus would then become the highest lute and the Superius the lowest but one.

Many intabulations of secular and sacred vocal compositions in the *Thysius Lute Book* give the impression of having been created by professional musicians; some were actually copied from earlier publications. But others, particularly some of the intabulations of sacred music, appear to be Smout's own work. Duos and trios by Peter Philips, Pietro Lappi, Jacob Finetti and others have been transcribed note for note, without the addition of any diminutions, and the words for the different vocal parts are written under the tablature staff, which is unusual. This is also the case in psalm 6 by Jan Pieterszoon Sweelinck (where the text for each of the four voices is scribbled below the staff), as well as in some settings of other psalms by Sweelinck, Goudimel and Le Jeune. The fact that intabulating did not always come easily to Smout is shown in his setting of psalm 1, where he added notes, changed them, crossed or rubbed them out and took out bar lines. In the later script phases of the manuscript, incidentally, Smout also seems to have made his own lute arrangements of a number of Latin sacred works, as is evident from the numerous deletions and corrections. As an exercise, Smout would sometimes set different voice combinations from such a work for the lute.



The Thysius Lute Book, f. 238v. Psalm 6 by Sweelinck, with the words added  
and many corrections in the music

We can conclude by saying that the Thysius Lute Book, the most extensive volume of lute music in the world, reflects the musical interests of Adriaen Smout as a student at Leiden and as the scholar, preacher and polemicist he later became. It gives a wide cross-section of the popular and serious music in fashion among the Dutch elite of the late 16th and early 17th centuries. As it is also one of the very few surviving lute manuscripts from the days of the Dutch Republic, it is of great musical and cultural-historical value. It seems to belong to a German tradition of student lute books, and it provides insight into intabulation practice and the way four lutes could be played together. But above all, the Lute Book is of inestimable value for our knowledge of the popular musical culture of the Netherlands in the 17th century, since it contains rare records of melodies that played an important part in the song repertoire of the time, and which recur continually in contrafacta. Without the Thysius Lute Book these songs could never be sung again. It also contains versions from an international repertoire – polyphonic chansons, madrigals and motets, and pavaues, galliards and other dance forms for the lute – that provide insight into the dissemination of these works in the Dutch Republic. Many of the settings of the psalms, songs and dances are simple but effective, and work well on the lute.

### *Other manuscripts with Dutch lute music*

Apart from the Thysius manuscript, the crop of lute manuscripts from the Dutch Republic is rather meagre, although a few did survive. Some of them have only recently had their Dutch origins established, while others have not yet been fully researched. The latter applies to six lute pieces written on sheets bound in a Leiden University Library copy of *Deliciae Batavicae*, a small book by Jacob Marcus published in Leiden in 1616, which was intended for the members of the university itself. It is very likely that this music was notated (rather ineptly, as it happens) around 1620 by a student or academic at Leiden. Typically for the Dutch music scene, the six pieces come from different countries. There are settings of the Italian *passamezzo antico*, the English *Frog galliard*, the French *Courante Sarabande*, *Pavane d'Espagne* and *Bourrée de France*, and *Amarilli mia bella* from Italy.

A few foreign lute manuscripts also bear traces of Dutch copyists or Dutch music. The manuscript Berlin Mus. Ms. 40143, now kept in the Biblioteka Jagiellonska in Kraków, was notated by several people around 1600 in Cologne, judging from some annotations and the repertoire. With regard to the degree of difficulty and the impeccable transcription, the pieces are of a professional quality. It is possible that this manuscript was created in the direct vicinity of the famous lutenist Jean-Baptiste Besard, who published his *Thesaurus harmonicus* in Cologne in 1603. Alongside Latin, German and French titles, we also find headings like *De Nachtegael int wilde* [The Nightingale in the wild], *Den Lüstigen Mey* [The lusty May], *Lofsang Mariae* [Ode to Mary] and *Droevich mach ick wel clagen* [Sadly may I mourn]. These pieces will have come from the Netherlands, even though they are all anonymous.

Another lute manuscript from the same period also has a few Dutch traces. Berlin N. Mus. Ms. 479 was written in Strasbourg in 1619 for the young Austrian nobleman Wolfgang

Hoffman von Grünbüchel, who was studying there at the time. Four people worked on the book, and the third of them (who wrote a lot of the pieces) may have been a Dutchman, since he twice wrote the words *2 deel* [part 2] next to a two-part piece, and the manuscript contains his copy of the only known composition by the Leiden lutenist Herman Piso. The other compositions he notated originate, as far as we can ascertain, from the well-known international repertoire; particularly from France and England, alongside some Italian material.

There are also two English manuscripts with a hint of the Dutch about them. The Dallis Lute Book, kept in Dublin, was started in 1583 by a Cambridge student who had lute lessons with Thomas Dallis. It contains several pieces with Dutch titles and sacred texts, the latter all by Petrus Datheen. It is interesting that one or more lines of text are sometimes written under the tablature, and above it sometimes the note values or note names (*ut re fa mi sol la*) of the melody concerned. We must assume that Dallis had connections with one or more Calvinists from the Netherlands, who provided him with some sacred lute music.

Lute settings of Dutch origin in the Dallis Lute Book (Dublin, Trinity College Library, Ms.410/1), insofar as legible and decipherable:

p. 5/1: *De Lofsanck [...]gine*, with the words of the first verse under the tablature: *Myn sil maect grot den heer / Myn geest v(er)hugt hem seer / In mynen god vol trouwe / Hy is myn salicheyt / End will oock die kleynheyt synen dienstmaecht aebeschouwen*. Datheen's translation of the Magnificat.

p. 5/2: *Onse Vad(er)*.

p. 34/1: *Heft op u*. The first works of Datheen's *De tien geboden* [The ten commandments]: *Heft op uw hart, opent uw oren*.

p. 164: *Psal. 42. Als een hert bred*. Under the tablature is the beginning of Datheen's translation of psalm 42: *Als een hert gejacht o heere*.

p. 165: *bred. Psal. 81. Singt den heere bly*. Under the tablature is the beginning of Datheen's translation of psalm 81: *Singt den heerre bly*.

pp. 166-167: *Psal. 103 belg. bef. Languir me fais*. NB. This is a lute setting of a well-known French chanson. Exactly the same setting is found in Thysius (f. 165r-v). Psalm 103 of the *Souterliedekens* (Antwerp 1540) is indeed set to the melody of this chanson. The meaning of the (Dutch?) abbreviation *belg. bef.* (the letters are hard to decipher) is obscure.

The meaning of the word *bred* (again, the letters are hard to decipher) next to psalms 42 and 81 is also unclear.

The Dutch contribution to the Trumbull Lute Book, now in Cambridge University Library, consists of only two instances of the marginal annotation *Dat mout ich hebben* [I must have this]. The manuscript was the property of William Trumbull (c.1580-1635), who was at the Brussels court of Archduke Albert of Austria around 1606-1625, first as a secretary and later as the English ambas-

sador. The book was probably written in England at an earlier date, around 1595, when Trumbull started studying the lute. It contains only English music, and the two annotations appear to have been added later in Brussels by a lutenist from the Southern Netherlands, who wanted to copy the pieces in question (although the language does not seem to be purely Dutch – so maybe these notes were written by a German who was also staying at the court).

For the sake of completeness, we can also mention the lute book of Lord Herbert of Cherbury (1583–1648), an English nobleman who played lute and composed for it himself. His collection, which was probably put together in the 1630s, contains three dances (two *voltas* and a *courante*), which the manuscript ascribes to a certain ‘Pietreson’. Although he has sometimes been identified as Jan Pieterszoon Sweelinck, it is extremely unlikely that he would have had anything to do with these lute pieces in the fashionable French style of around 1620.

Four manuscripts with tablatures for lute and viol that really do originate from the Dutch Republic are to be found in the castle of the Austrian noble family Goëss in Ebenthal, near Klagenfurt. These books, which must have been created between 1655 and 1670, are related to one another, as each contains contributions written by the same hand. In the literature, it is assumed that there must be some sort of link between these manuscripts and Constantijn Huygens, as they contain pieces by composers with whom he is known to have corresponded, such as the lutenists Jacques de Saint-Luc and François Dufaut and the gambist Nicolas Hotman, whose oeuvre has survived for a large part in precisely these manuscripts. Furthermore, there is also one piece by Huygens himself, for solo viol, which is his only surviving piece apart from the works published in the *Pathodia*. There are also a large number of works by the viol player Dietrich (Theodore) Stoeffken (Steffkins), who was probably an Englishman living in Holland around 1646–1651, maybe in the service of the family of Orange. He was a good friend of Huygens, and they played together in the aforementioned period. The collection also contains works by composers found practically nowhere else, such as the viol player ‘Betkovsky’ and the lutenist Johannes Fresneau.

The Dutch connection is confirmed by what else we know about the manuscripts. The two books with viol music have a French inscription ‘à Utrecht’ followed by a date: 19 December 1664 in one, and 6 May 1668 in the other. Presumably these are the dates on which the volumes were completed and bound. These inscriptions are in the handwriting of the scribe who wrote down a large number of the pieces in the two lute books, and this handwriting has been identified. The musicologist Rudolf Rasch recently discovered that the writer is identical to Johan van Reede, Lord of Renswoude (1593–1682), an Orangist statesman and member of the Knighthood of Utrecht, who was president of the States of Utrecht and often acted as a diplomat on behalf of the States General. He was also an acquaintance of Huygens’. In 1650, he had Huygens inspect a lute and a theorbo of his, in order to possibly have the lute theorboed, i.e. to give it extra bass strings in an extended pegbox. Rasch has ascertained that Van Reede was the first owner of these four books, so these manuscripts were compiled for him (and partly by him). It is not known for certain how the manuscripts ended up in Austria. At the end of the 17th century, they would already have been in the possession of the first Duke of Goëss, Johan Peter, who came from the



Caspar Netscher (?), *Miniature portrait of Johan van Reede van Renswoude* (1672/73). Oil on iron, Centraal Museum Utrecht

prominent Goes family of the Southern Netherlands, and his wife Maria Anna von Sinzendorf-Erstbrunn, who is known to have played the lute.

In his lute and viol books, Johan van Reede collected the works of leading French lutenists of the day, such as Ennemond and Denis Gaultier, Du But, Mercure and Dufaut, as well as English and French viol players. Here, too, we find works by the aforementioned Frenchman living in Leiden, Johannes Fresneau. Van Reede appears to have collected part of the music during his trips abroad on diplomatic service.

The three manuscripts with lute compositions by Constantijn Huygens are a special case. Although they seem to have disappeared off the face of the earth, we do know some details of them, thanks to Pieter de la Ruë (1695-1770), an arithmetician from Zeeland, who wrote a five-part manuscript entitled *Mengeling van aantekeningen over zaaken van verscheiden aard* [Miscellany of notes on matters of diverse nature], which is now in the Amsterdam University Library. In one of these notes, De la Ruë describes how in October 1738 he saw three oblong manuscripts in octavo in Callenfels bookshop in Middelburg, two of which had parchment pages and were bound in



red gilt-edged morocco. The third was simpler, made of paper with a parchment binding. De la Ruë went to the trouble of describing the books in great detail, so that we know that the three volumes were full of lute compositions by Constantijn Huygens, mostly in his own handwriting. The thinner of the luxury set, written completely by Huygens himself, was dated 8 January 1648, with the heading 'My compositions, in the old lute tuning, ordered by date'. Then followed a list of pieces, which were ordered by genre and each given a number: 18 allemandes, 23 courantes, 19 galliards, and so forth. Huygens had apparently made a neat copy of his compositions in the old lute tuning (see above, p. 79). In it, he ordered the pieces by genre, and put them in chronological order within each genre.

*Heading in the first lute manuscript by Huygens:*

Ma composition, Sur le viel accord du Luth, selon les dates

Alemandes – 18

Courantes – 23

Gaiglardes – 19

Gigues – 2

Sarabandes – 25

Pavanes – 11

Airs – 1

Pseaumes – 6

Doubles – 10

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The second luxury manuscript was thicker and apparently contained more pieces than the 115 of the first book. It, too, was entirely written by Huygens himself. This one was headed *Ma composition, sur l'accord moderne du Luth, rangée selon les Tons* [My compositions, in the modern lute tuning, ordered by key]. So these pieces were in the modern *accord nouveau* of the lute, which had emerged in France in the late 1630s, soon superseding the old tuning there. Under each piece, the place of composition was given in French or Latin, (De la Ruë gives the examples *Londini, Parisiis, Hagae, Hofwijk, au chateau d'Orange* [in London, in Paris, in The Hague, in Hofwijk, at the castle of Orange], as well as descriptions like *in rheda, sub tonsore, navigans turbato Scaldi* [in the carriage, at the barber's, sailing on the turbulent river Scheldt]. This manuscript is not dated, but we are given a chance clue from the mention of the castle of Orange in Southern France. Huygens stayed here from April to July 1665, looking after the affairs of the Nassaus. Before that, he was in France from the autumn of 1661, mostly in Paris negotiating with the French king, and in between he was in London again from June to October 1664. This book, which would once again have been a neat manuscript and a retrospective of lute works written all in one go, was made after October 1665 at the earliest, when he had returned home again. But it may have been

written much later, as he was back in London once more from November 1670 to October 1671. A letter was stuck into the front of the book, from the famous French lutenist Jacques de Saint-Luc, whom Huygens has asked for his opinion on his pieces (see p. 79).

In the third manuscript, bound in *hoorn* (a kind of stiff parchment), the music is written in a different hand. On the title page, Huygens himself had written *Copies de la main de John Pain Anglois, mon valet; ma Composition...* [Copies in the hand of John Pain, Englishman, my servant; my compositions...], after which the heading continues as in the first book. So this is probably a copy of the book of pieces in the old tuning. According to De la Ruë, the places and dates had been added to the pieces by Huygens himself.

A little further on in his notes, De la Ruë remarks on his subsequent dealings with the manuscripts. He informed the family, in the person of Lord Huygens van Zelhem, of the find, but he let it be known that while he appreciated the gesture he had ‘no inclination’ towards the music books in question. Indeed, it turned out that no fewer than 200 such manuscript books had been in the estate of the elder Huygens, 40 of which had been sold. It is highly unlikely that all 200 books contained compositions by Huygens himself, and the majority would probably have been manuscripts of music by other composers. Eventually De la Ruë bought all three books himself for the price of one *pistool* (an old coin). Since then, there has been no trace of the volumes whatsoever.

### *Manuscripts with music by Joachim van den Hove*

Apart from the Thysius Lute Book, few Dutch lute manuscripts remain from the first quarter of the 17th century. It is therefore even more remarkable that we still have another manuscript from this period. It concerns a very special case, since we can link it directly to Joachim van den Hove. A rather modest little book is kept in the Staatsbibliothek Preussischer Kulturbesitz in Berlin, around 20 x 7.5 cm in size and 178 folios thick, bound in the original pigskin cover. Each page, except for the first and last, is covered with three systems of lute tablature (i.e. six lines per system), but these are only filled with music at the beginning and end of the book, with folio 81 verso to folio 158 recto being left blank. All the music and annotations are written in the same hand, although the handwriting at the front of the book differs slightly from that at the back. At the front it is big and bold, while at the back it is smaller and cramped. However, we cannot really talk of a front and back in this manuscript, as the second part is written the other way up to the first part, so that each end reads as the beginning.

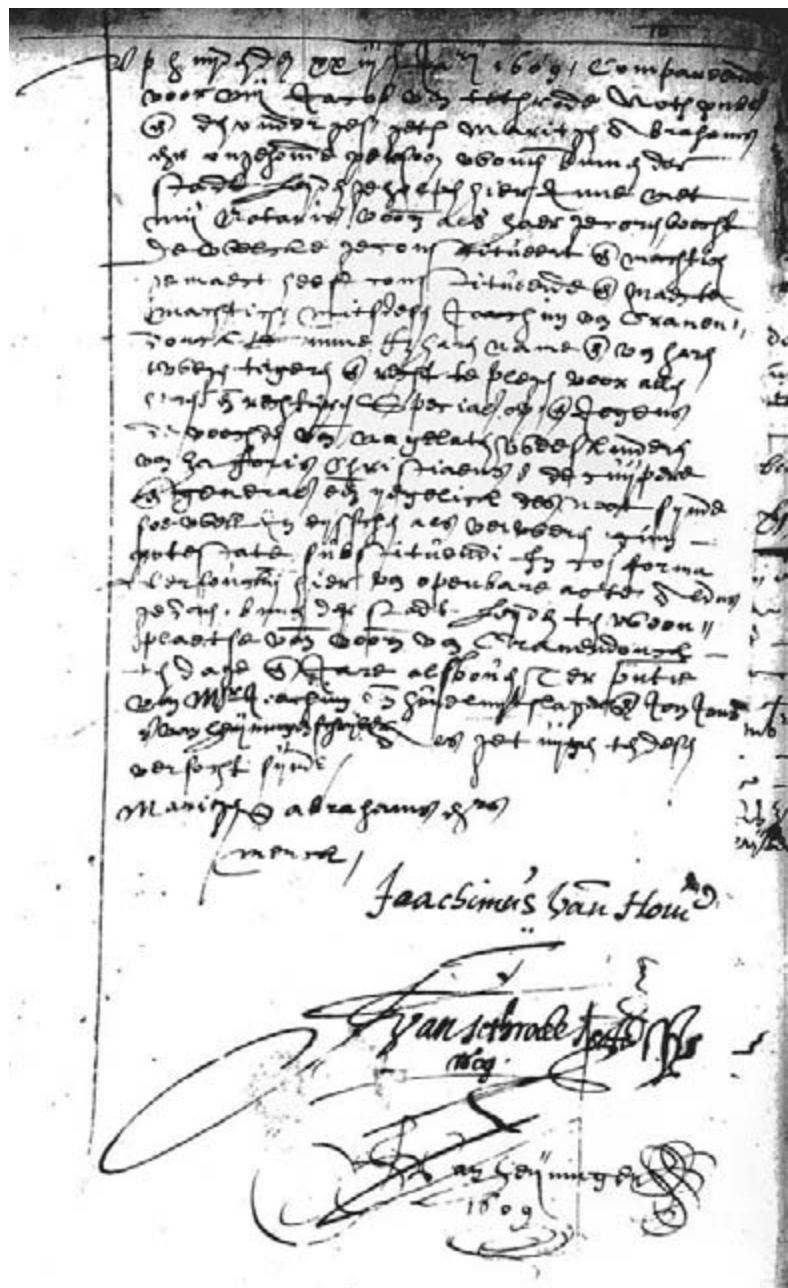
In view of the music written in it and the Dutch titles, the manuscript originated somewhere in the Netherlands. It has traditionally been associated with Joachim van den Hove, as he is the only composer mentioned in it. His name is given several times, written in a style that looks like a signature. Van den Hove’s signature has survived on some notarial deeds from Leiden and on the aforementioned inscription in an *album amicorum*, and it is identical to the one in the lute book. In its entirety, this manuscript is therefore an autograph by this lutenist, i.e. a work written in his own hand.

The differences between the two parts of the manuscript are interesting. The one in the larger handwriting has detailed compositions of high quality. The pieces are grouped loosely by genre. Many of them have a dedication, all to the Adam Leenaerts mentioned earlier, who is described in the notes as Van den Hove's 'friend' and 'patron'. Some of the pieces also have a date, which is presumably the date on which it was composed or dedicated to Leenaerts. These dates, given in chronological order in the book, allow us to date this part of the manuscript. They fall between 1 January and 2 August 1615, so this part would have been written by Van den Hove between the autumns of 1614 and 1615. The work was apparently intended for Leenaerts, who may have ordered a book of lute music from the composer.

The other part in the smaller handwriting, without the fingering for the right hand that is given in the first part, gives the impression of being a musician's 'notebook'. Earlier on, we discussed the presumed existence of this type of book. In itself it consists of two parts: one quire of sketches for *passamezzi* in different keys, and a section of two quires mainly of melodies on which to base variations (for instance, simple versions of the well-known tune *Fortuna Anglese*, again in different keys), as well as written-out accompaniments to polyphonic *balletti* by Gastoldi, which were top hits of the day. To judge by the handwriting this second part was written over a short period. It may have served as a supplement to the rather lean content of the book intended for Leenaerts, which even so still contained dozens of blank pages. If this were the case, then this additional part would date from the end of 1615.

Works by Joachim van den Hove have been handed down in two other manuscripts that, although originating in part in the Dutch Republic, cannot really be called Dutch manuscripts. They are the two Herold and Schele lute books mentioned earlier.

On the title page of the Herold Lute Book, which is now in a private collection, there is an annotation that it was copied in Padua in 1602 from the hand-written lute book of Christoph Herold. We know that Herold was born in Halle (Germany) and was registered at the faculty of law at Leiden University on 20 September 1598. He probably stayed there until 1601, as on 16 December of that year he was registered at the University of Padua. During his student days, this enthusiastic and accomplished lutenist collected around 40 high-quality works in his lute book. The fantasies, pavaues, galliards, balletti and other dances in French, Italian and English fashion contained in his book lend it a more distinguished tone than that of the Thysius Lute Book, with its diverse contents. In his Leiden period, Herold probably took lessons from Joachim van den Hove, as is shown by the large number of works (fifteen in all) that were either composed by Van den Hove or came directly from his circle, and some of these are also found in his 1601 book, *Florida*. These pieces are also largely grouped together in Herold's lute book and, unlike other works in the manuscript, they display the peculiarities of musical notation we find in Van den Hove's own lute books. These fifteen pieces thus provide insight into the repertoire that Christoph Herold studied with Joachim van den Hove and they show how, at the time he must have been working on the *Florida*, the composer used the music included in this book in his teaching practice.



Deed with Joachim van den Hove's signature, 1609. Leiden Archives, Old notarial archives, no. 76, f. 10



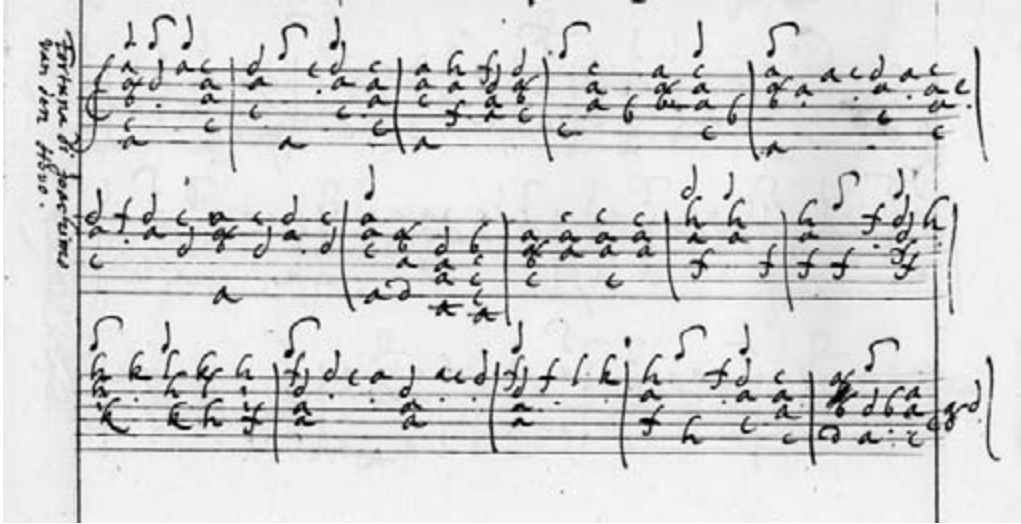
Ms. Hove-1, f. 11r (the large handwriting in the first part)



Ms. Hove-1, f. 16v (the small handwriting in the second part)

The second student book in which we find works by Van den Hove is the lute book of Ernst Schele, which is now in the Hamburg University Library. The first page bears the name Ernst Schele, who probably came from Hamburg, and the date 1619. The manuscript was apparently created by this person in the same year, as most of it was written over a very short period, although he clearly did so on the basis of a collection of older papers. Besides the title and sometimes the name of the composer, a place and date are given alongside many of the pieces, which will be the place and date of copying the music. This shows that the music was collected in the years 1614-16 in Leiden, Angers, Orléans, Paris, Metz, Frankfurt, Venice and Naples respectively. It is an extensive collection, totalling over 150 pieces, which, like in the Thysius Lute Book, are roughly ordered by genre. It is not known whether the music was collected by Ernst Schele himself or by someone else (or maybe more than one person). In 1614, while the collector was staying in Leiden, nobody of that name can be found at the university. However, in June 1612 a Daniel Schele from Hamburg was registered there, who may have been





Ms. Herold, f. 18v, the beginning of a setting of Fortuna by Joachim van den Hove

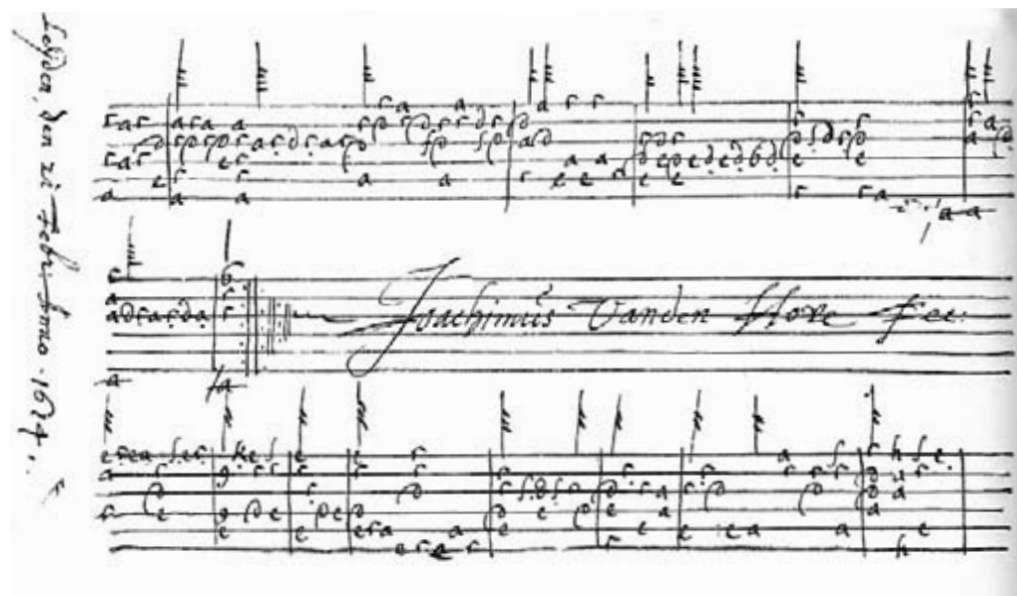
a relative of Ernst and who may have gathered the 'Leiden' music on the spot. Whoever this lute-playing collector was, he moved in the circle of Joachim van den Hove, to whom most of these Leiden pieces are ascribed. Daniel Schele (or someone else) probably obtained Van den Hove's music as a lute pupil, collecting as many as 24 works in total. These include the farewell pieces mentioned earlier, composed by Van den Hove on the occasion of his friends leaving Leiden. Next to a few pieces, the composer's name is written in such a way as to suggest that Schele has copied a signature. The collector may have received autographs from Van den Hove or copies signed by him. In any case, these are high-quality copies, like those in the Herold Lute Book, with none of the mistakes and awkwardness that sometimes mar other lute manuscripts.

### *The printed lute books of Van den Hove and Vallet*

The fact that we regard Joachim van den Hove and Nicolaes Vallet as the leading lutenists of the Northern Netherlands is not so much due to their works that survive in manuscripts, as to the great quantities of music they published in printed form. In this, they differ from the other lutenists of the Golden Age, possibly surpassing them in the creative impulses necessary for producing music, but certainly by having a greater artistic and commercial ambition to bring their art into the public domain.

In doing so, they were taking quite a risk, as publishing lute books was a treacherous undertaking. First, the authors could probably no longer give the published pieces to their pupils, who would have wanted to spend their tuition fees on learning new pieces. But more importantly, publishing a lute book demanded of the authors not only a creative investment, but also a considerable financial investment. The risk was borne largely or wholly by them, and not by the printer





Ms. Schele, p. 68. The end of Joachim van den Hove, *Toccate, Gemaect ter Eeren Van Mons: Vander Linden*.  
In Leyden, den 21 Febr: Anno 1614, with copied signature

or publisher mentioned on the title page. The latter looked after the technical side of the production process: typesetting or engraving the preliminary matter and the music, printing the whole book and distributing it to middlemen and the book fairs. But before production could start, they would undoubtedly have wanted an advance from the author, so that in the event of a commercial failure they would not be saddled with too heavy a financial blow. As we saw in the case of Joachim van de Hove in particular, it appears that this lutenist ran into debt for his publications. Though this would have been offset by income from sales, we do not know the extent to which this covered the costs. In any case, Van den Hove went bankrupt. Vallet's financial problems in 1633, however, took place long after he had published his lute books, so their publication appears to have played no part in those problems.

### The lute books of Joachim van den Hove

In 1601, around eight years after Joachim van den Hove had settled in Leiden, his first book, popularly known as *Florida*, was issued. The substantial book in folio was published in Utrecht. Eleven years later, in 1612, Van den Hove's second book, *Delitiae musicae*, was produced by the same Utrecht publisher. Not only do both books have almost identical title pages, apart from the main title and illustration, but with regard to content, they also have a similar layout. This is why it is best to discuss the two books together here.

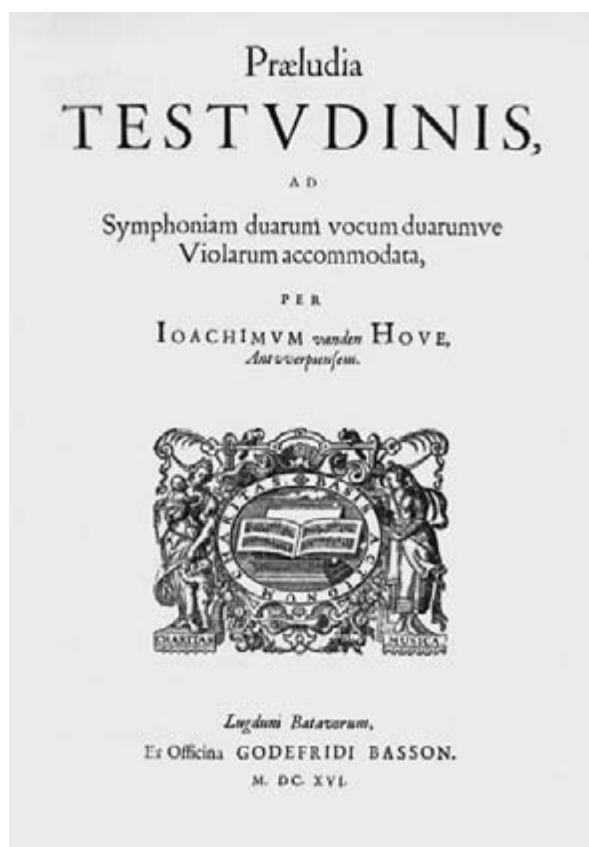
*The three lute books of Joachim Van den Hove*



1. *Florida, sive cantiones, e quamplurimis praestantissimorum nostri aevi musicorum libris selectae, ad testudinis usum accommodatae, opera atque industria Joachimi vanden Hove Antverpiani* [Flowers, or songs, collected from various books by the leading musicians of our day, made suitable for playing on the lute through the work and efforts of Joachim van den Hove from Antwerp]. Utrecht: Salomon de Roy, in collaboration with Jan Willemszoon Van Rhenen, 1601

2. *Delitiae musicae, sive cantiones, e quamplurimis praestantissimorum nostri aevi musicorum libris selectae, ad testudinis usum accommodatae, opera atque industria Joachimi vanden Hove Antverpiani*. Apart from the main title ('Pleasures of music'), the text of the title page is identical to that of *Florida*. Utrecht: Salomon de Roy (Jan Willemszoon van Rhenen is now only mentioned as the seller), 1612. The engraving on the title page was re-used in the emblem book *Nieuwen Jeucht Spieghel* (Arnhem 1617), p. 97

3. *Praeludia testudinis, ad Symphoniam duarum vocum duarumve Violarum accommodata, per Ioachim vanden Hove, Antwerpiensem* [‘Preludes for the lute, arranged to be played with two voices or two gambas by Joachim van den Hove from Antwerp’]. Leiden: Govert Basson, 1616



*Florida* has 110 folia (i.e. 220 pages) containing 117 compositions. *Delitiae* is slightly thinner, with 66 folia (132 pages), but it contains nearly as many works: 105 compositions. The contents of the two books can be outlined as follows (apart from a couple of short supplementary pieces to fill up a page, which are not part of the layout):

<i>Florida</i>	<i>Delitiae</i>
7 fantasies	6 preludes
50 intabulations of vocal works	36 intabulations of vocal works
	6 pavaues
8 passamezzi	7 passamezzi
6 pavaues	
29 other dances:	39 other dances:
10 galliards	12 galliards
	(followed by 2 variation works)
6 allemandes	8 allemandes and 4 balletti
6 courantes	
1 Spagnolette;	
4 voltas;	
2 branles;	4 branles
	11 courantes
11 popular (dance) tunes	6 popular (dance) tunes
(interspersed by 3 more allemandes)	

Apart from one or two changes – the pavaues have changed places with the passamezzi, the courantes are placed further on and the voltas have been replaced by balletti – the construction of *Delitiae* is practically identical to that of *Florida*. This layout was not invented by Van den Hove himself, as many of the contemporary publications of lute music have a similar one. The two books bear an especially striking resemblance to the books by Emanuel Adriaenssen, who may have been Van den Hove's teacher in Antwerp. This must have been a case of deliberate copying.

In *Florida* and *Delitiae*, most of the space is taken up by the intabulations of vocal works. As explicitly referred to in the subtitle of both books, these are songs from publications by other composers in settings for lute by Van den Hove. In the same way that piano arrangements of the top hits from operas and the symphonic repertoire were made in the 19th century, people played the famous vocal works of the 16th century on the society instrument of the day, the lute. As in *Florida*, such settings occupy first place in the total lute repertoire published at the time, as far as quantity is concerned. As regards quality, the genre can certainly hold its own with the other lute music: the fantasies and dances played with such enthusiasm by today's lutenists, while largely ignoring the intabulations. The reason for doing so is probably the present-day unfamiliarity with the vocal models, but maybe also the difficult musical and technical level of much of the material.

Around 1600, the genre was clearly held in a more positive regard, judging by the prominent place Van den Hove gave to the intabulations in the title and contents of *Florida* and *Delitiae*, as well as in his later works. He must have invested a lot of time, energy and money in these pieces, in collecting editions and maybe also some manuscripts of vocal music (for both publications he consulted around 30 editions, mainly from Antwerp), selecting suitable works from them and scoring them (polyphonic music was then usually published in separate part

The complex polyphonic interweaving of the vocal originals, in which the five or six voices imitate and cross one another, is of course difficult to represent on the lute, with its restrictions of six or seven courses stopped by five fingers. The way in which Van den Hove set to work is no different from that of many of his contemporaries. In principle, he tries to retain as many notes of the original as possible, and only the six-voice works are greatly simplified. Van de Hove then adds ornaments and embellishments, consisting of figuration: quick runs that embellish the long notes of a voice, usually the upper voice. These embellishments sometimes consist of small motifs, though more often they are longer, scale-like passages. The figuration in *Florida* is quicker, more exuberant and more diverse than that in *Delitiae*, where the ornaments are more subdued.

The musical score is presented in two systems. The first system, starting at measure 12, includes a vocal line with the lyrics "lu - ce e di be - a - to ar - do - re," and a lute line. The lute line features complex figuration, including scale-like passages. The second system, starting at measure 17, includes a vocal line with the lyrics "spi-ri-tu do il su - per - no al - to fa - to - re, Da" and a lute line. The lute line continues with intricate figuration, including scale-like passages. The lute line is labeled "lute" and shows complex figuration, including scale-like passages.

22

Philippe de Monte, *Occhi vaghi amorosi à 5*, first part, bars 12-27, with Van den Hove's intabulation underneath,  
*Florida*, f. 49v-50

booklets), and finally arranging them for the lute. The majority of the intabulations are madrigals and *balletti* to Italian texts, usually by Italian composers – Van den Hove's favourite is the famous Luca Marenzio – but also by others like Cornelis Schuyt and the Antwerp composer Cornelis Verdonck; there is also a chanson by Sweelinck. Van den Hove also included some intabulations of motets (sacred compositions to Latin texts), most of which were written by Orlando di Lasso.

In *Florida*, two voices of the original composition are given alongside the intabulations. The upper voice and bass of the model are printed opposite a page of tablature, in the usual mensural notation, despite the fact that these voices are also included in the intabulation, with or without embellishment. These additions are not found in *Delitiae*, and one thing and another leads us to conclude that the intabulations in *Florida* can also be played simply as lute solos.

Nevertheless, *Florida* and *Delitiae* open with other pieces: the former with seven fantasias and the latter with six preludes. The fantasias in *Florida* are mostly large-scale works, in very diverse styles. The first is a long composition on the oft-used hexachord theme, i.e. the first six notes of the scale, first ascending in half notes and then descending in whole notes. It seems as though the composers of instrumental music in this period competed with one another in their fantasias on this simple theme, which gave them every opportunity to display their inventiveness and contrapuntal mastery. Van den Hove's second fantasia is also of interest. It is another substantial piece, and is partly constructed on a fantasia by Emanuel Adriaenssen, by which Van den Hove may have wanted to pay tribute to his presumed teacher in Antwerp. He may even have wanted to surpass him, as his piece is much longer, more complex and more virtuosic than Adriaenssen's. The fourth is what is known as an echo fantasia, in which the voices or pairs of voices imitate one another, as the name suggests, in octaves. This specific form of the genre was popular mainly in the Netherlands and is found, for instance, in Sweelinck's oeuvre for keyboard



instruments. The seventh fantasia is an intabulation of a four-voice instrumental canzone by Giovanni Gabrieli, although his name is not mentioned.

In *Delitiae*, the opening place of honour is occupied by the preludes, which probably indicates that Van den Hove had switched his interest from one genre to the other, as would also become apparent in the following years. Preludes originated as warming-up pieces or finger exercises for the beginning of a concert, but Van den Hove's preludes do not usually have the free, improvisational structure we would associate with this. They often bear more resemblance to the fantasias, although they are less ambitious in length, less bound to a formal, tripartite structure, have less imitative counterpoint, and are generally written in a less virtuosic style. Some exhibit great expressiveness, such as the *Praeludium Lachrimae* in *Delitiae*, which is based on John Dowland's famous pavan of the same name.

After the fantasias or preludes and the intabulations comes a third part with substantial compositions, namely those of the passamezzi. This genre originated in Italy and was found all over Europe in publications of instrumental music from the second half of the 16th century until into the 17th century. There were a few different forms, each characterised by a short, simple harmonic scheme that could be repeated and improvised on to one's heart's content, just as jazz and blues musicians are accustomed to doing today. The best-known were the *passamezzo antico*, in *Florida* called *passamezzo d'Italia*, and the *passamezzo moderno*. The *antico* is characterised by a harmony in 'minor' (to use an anachronistic term, not yet employed around 1600), and the *moderno* is in 'major'.

Both *Florida* and *Delitiae* contain a whole series of passamezzi, ordered by type and key. First there are four *anticos* in different keys that suit the lute, then four (in *Delitiae* three) *modernos*, once again in different keys. Each composition consists of a long part in a binary time signature (two or four beats in the bar), called a pavane, followed by a shorter part in threes, called a galliard. Some of the *antico* galliards have a free closing section (a 'coda') in major. In general, the *anticos* are longer and more complex than the *modernos*.

Initially, the pieces would have originated through improvisation, but the passamezzi in *Florida* and *Delitiae* are in fact the result of an intensive process of composition, sometimes with complex figuration consisting of mostly short rhythmic and/or melodic motifs, which are regularly imitated. In the compositions, Van den Hove uses the English style of variation rather than the Italian one, the latter of which shows more of a preference for long passagework, whereas Van den Hove's scale passages are virtually never longer than one bar. Compared to *Florida*, where the



Harmonic schemes for the *passamezzo antico* (above) and *moderno* (below)

figurations are often long and virtuosic, those in *Delitiae* are a little shorter, less exuberant and more melodically oriented.

In *Florida* and *Delitiae*, the passamezzi are followed by a large block of dances, which are also in a more or less traditional order, as found in other collections of lute music: pavanes (in *Delitiae* placed before the passamezzi, for some unknown reason), galliards and allemandes, followed by the more modern genres: courantes (in *Delitiae* placed at the end of the block), voltas in the first book and *balletti* in the second, and finally back to the more traditional branles. In these works, Van den Hove reveals himself to be well acquainted with the modern international repertoire, as we find English pavans, Italian galliards and French courantes placed comfortably alongside his own works. The allemandes, balletti and branles, too, are largely based on material from abroad, from France and England.

Both books close with a slightly more modest section of settings of popular melodies and dance tunes. It is striking that many of the songs he has chosen come from England, including the famous *Greensleeves* – which is only found in two contemporary sources on the continent, both from Leiden; it is in the Thysius Lute Book as well as in *Florida*. In *Delitiae* we also find music of Italian and French origin, namely *Bergamasca* and *Une jeune fillette* respectively. Despite this international orientation, which is so characteristic of music of the period in the Netherlands, Van den Hove also makes space for music from his native country, as shown in the settings of tunes with titles like *Hansken is so fraeyen gesel* [Hans is such a handsome lad], *Hollanschen boerendans* [Dutch country dance] and *Chanson Flameng* [Flemish Song].

As far as content is concerned, the manuscripts containing music by Van den Hove discussed earlier – Herold, Schele and the Berlin autograph – are in the same league as *Florida* and *Delitiae*. The pieces in Herold were notated around 1600, when Van den Hove was also working on *Florida*. Much of the material in the manuscript recurs in the publication, albeit in a slightly different form, which teaches us something about the way in which Van den Hove seems to have dealt with his music – but more about that later. The same applies in part to the Schele Lute Book; with regard to Van den Hove's music, it was notated in Leiden in 1614. Here, too, several pieces we know from *Florida* (though remarkably not those from *Delitiae* from 1612) recur in a different form. A striking new aspect of his repertoire here is the appearance of farewell pieces and toccatas. He may not have considered these pieces so well suited for publication, as they concern occasional works: the first genre, of course, because they were composed for a particular occasion, namely the departure of a friend or pupil from Leiden, and the second because Van den Hove's toccatas were pre-eminently improvised pieces. We can see this from their form. They often open with a few chords to set the harmony, which are followed by some rather rhapsodic passage work in a light (mostly two-voice) texture, using 'easy' means like parallel thirds, sixths or tenths, and echoes, all built on a simple harmonic scheme. For the ending, too, Van den Hove often used set formulae, as we also find in other works of his. Earlier, we saw that Van den Hove proudly noted next to one of these toccatas (in this case, in the Berlin autograph) that he had improvised it, and this turns out to be a somewhat more complex piece that even includes imita-

Transcript of *Hansken is so frayen gesel*, printed in *Florida* f. 110r (see p. 22 for the original tablature).  
 The melody is the earliest surviving one in Dutch lute books, including those of Adriaenssen and Thysius.  
 It is also found in a couple of English sources of a slightly later date. This may possibly be one of the few examples of a Dutch melody being adopted in England, rather than the more usual opposite way round

tion, which explains the explicit mention of his achievement in this case. And yet quite a number of these quasi-improvised toccatas have still been recorded on paper.

In the Berlin manuscript written by Van den Hove himself, we see how he goes off at a slightly different musical tangent around 1615. The old repertoire is still there, although rather less prominently than before. The 'rough book' contains mainly short passamezzi and settings of popular tunes and dance tunes. And the neat manuscript contains a few preludes, toccatas, a fantasia, a couple of intabulations, some other dances like pavaues, galliards and allemandes (and a small series of Polish dances, which are also a type of allemande), another couple of settings of folk tunes and some substantial series of variations on the melody of *Onze Vader in Hemelrijk* and *De lustelijcke mei*. But a new addition is a large number of fashionable French dances, namely courantes and voltas, in the modern style, which is characterised by a light, usually two-voice texture and which rapidly superseded the old contrapuntal style with its full polyphony. The fact that Joachim van den Hove was well aware of this musical development is demonstrated by his autograph.

At the same time Van den Hove produced another book in which the old art of polyphonic lute-playing was actually taken to great heights: his *Praeludia testudinis*, published by Godfried

*The development of lute music in the 17th century*

Around 1600, 'composed' lute music (fantasias, intabulations and stylised dances) was still based on the idea of polyphony: different voices that moved independently of one another and were all of equal importance. In addition, lutenists aimed for a three- or four-voice texture. The example below of the *Favorito* (a galliard, i.e. a quick dance), by Joachim van den Hove, gives a good idea of this style.

In the years that followed, this was soon superseded by a completely new style from France, characterised by a thin, essentially two-voice texture of melody and bass, with an extra note here and there to supplement the harmony (see the courante below, from Van den Hove's Berlin autograph).

In the second quarter of the century, French lutenists took this new style one step further, giving the melody a more quirky line and having the melody, bass and harmonic filler notes played in turn, alternating irregularly, rather than played at the same time as before. This broke up the musical lines (see the last example: a courante by Fresneau). This *stile brisé*, or broken style, was to dominate lute music for the rest of the 17th century, and was also adopted by harpsichord players.



Van den Hove, *Favorito* (*Delitiae*, f. 50v-51r), bars 9-18



Van den Hove (?), *Courante La Dolfinee* (Ms. Berlin, f. 38v), bars 9-15



Fresneau, *Courante* (Goëss I, f. 22v-23r), bars 10-22. The symbol ) denotes an embellishment

Basson in Leiden in 1616. As the title suggests, this work is devoted to the prelude, alongside an Echo Fantasy and two substantial pavanés. These pieces, however, bear little resemblance to the short, often toccata-like warm-up pieces of some other preludes by Van den Hove. The works in *Praeludia* are long and in strictly four-voice counterpoint (in which imitation plays no large part), and each has its own character. The emphasis lies on the upper voice and bass, with the melodies spun out in long lines. The uniform style would suggest that they were created over a short period and especially for this volume, for the most part, although we find one or two a little earlier on, in the Schele manuscript and the Berlin autograph (1614 and 1615).

The full title of the *Praeludia* volume can be translated as: ‘Preludes for the lute, arranged to be played with two voices or two viols by Joachim van den Hove from Antwerp’. Apparently, the idea was to print two part books of notes alongside the tablature, so that musicians could play or sing along with the lute (without text, using solmisation). Indeed, this practice was not unusual. Once again, the Emanuel Adriaenssen books give examples of a lute that accompanies two instruments; in this case, five galliards in his publication *Novum Pratum musicum* (1592). But there is no trace whatsoever of the two part books belonging to *Praeludia*. If they were in fact ever printed (and it is possible they were not, to save on costs), then they have not survived. However, it is probably no great loss, as the lute parts (except for one) are, musically speaking, complete in themselves. As we have already seen, a couple of pieces have also been handed down as solos in manuscript form. As in the case of Adriaenssen, the separate parts would simply have doubled the upper voice and bass of the lute part. The one exception, where we really do miss the additional parts, is the *Echo*, the last piece in the volume. In some places in the lute part, a few counts of rest have been notated, precisely where the two other voices would have played or sung the echo repeat.

The works in *Florida* are not ascribed to a composer, and many of the pieces in the Berlin autograph are anonymous as well. Moreover, we know that some of the works in *Florida* and *Delitiae* were composed by other lutenists. Yet on the basis of a stylistic comparison with the works that can definitely be ascribed to Van den Hove, we can in many cases make a reasonable assumption as to which pieces he composed or intabulated himself. And taking an overview of the whole oeuvre of Joachim van den Hove, we are able to say something about the development of his musical style between *Florida* and Herold around the turn of the century and *Praeludia* and the Berlin autograph fifteen years later. In the older literature, Van den Hove was sometimes called a conservative composer, but we do not think this opinion is justified. It would have been based on *Florida* and *Delitiae*, his best-known works, and in them he does indeed follow the Antwerp school from the last quarter of the 16th century, in which Adriaenssen played the main role. And it is also the case in the incidence of certain genres. The large amount of space given to intabulations, in particular, was certainly a thing of the past in 1612, when *Delitiae* was published. On the other hand, we can point to the fact that in *Florida*, Van den Hove was already giving plenty of attention to the English pavan, which definitely made him a forerunner in 1601. The Italian galliards and French courantes and voltas in *Florida* also testify to an ear for the latest developments in the musical field. In the 1610s, Van den Hove continued to update his work, as shown by the disappearance of most of the fantasias and intabulations from his repertoire, and their replacement by toccatas and French dances in the fashionable light texture, which are in stark contrast to his earlier polyphonic works. However, he did not say goodbye completely to the old style, as shown by the compositions in *Praeludia*, as well as a few farewell pieces and pavaues of the period, which are characterised by their strict form and musical depth. Another innovative streak in Van den Hove's later works is his experimentation with alternative tunings for the lute; an element that would lead in the following decades to completely new paths in lute music. In these years, Van den Hove also followed the trend (to be discussed later) of increasing the number of strings on his lute. In *Florida* (1601), most of the music is for a six- or seven-course instrument, whereas the works in Schele, Berlin and *Praeludia* from the period 1614-1616 often require eight or nine courses.

Even more developments can be seen in Van den Hove's musical style. As we saw, in the earliest pieces he followed the Antwerp style of Emanuel Adriaenssen, who was possibly his teacher, although his figurations are far more virtuoso and exuberant than those of his example, especially in the intabulations and passamezzi. And he exploits this virtuosity to the full, for example by usually writing out the repeats in full in the dances – the second time with quick ornaments and scale passages. In *Delitiae* Van den Hove's music becomes much more subdued. The figuration is calmer (now usually in semiquavers instead of the smaller note values that keep cropping up in *Florida*) and more melodious. Moreover, the repeat variations in the dances are no longer written out in full, although this does not mean they were not to be played. The player was expected to improvise them himself, as was the custom at the time.





Van den Hove, *Passemezo Bedurum* (*Florida*, f. 86r-86v), bars 64-72



Van den Hove, *Passemezo Bedurum* (*Delitiae*, f. 47r-47v), bars 64-73

As chance would have it, some of Joachim van den Hove's works have survived in several versions, and this circumstance gives us insight into the very free manner in which a lutenist dealt with his own compositions. For instance, in *Florida* (1601), Van den Hove published a parody on a well-known composition by John Dowland, the *Lachrimae* pavan, on which dozens of composers, including Sweelinck, wrote variations at the beginning of the 17th century. The work originated in England around 1590 and Van den Hove was one of the first to create his own version of it, or rather several own versions. Van den Hove's *Lachrimae* also appears in the Herold manuscript, based on works notated in Leiden around 1600, but in a form considerably different to the one in *Florida*. Parts of the piece are the same in both settings, while others have been moved and yet others have been composed anew. There are some big differences between these two versions, which were written at more or less the same time. It is interesting

that we have another *Lachrimae* setting by Van den Hove, notated in the Schele Lute Book and dated 14 February 1614, which is the date the piece was copied in Leiden. Compared to the earlier versions, the piece appears to have been largely re-written, although fragments of the settings from around 1600 can still be traced.

A few other surviving pieces by Van den Hove have been handed down to us in varying forms and often differ considerably, although not as much as in the case of *Lachrimae*. Sometimes the variations are limited in number, such as the pavaues with the intriguing titles *Inferno* and *Paradiso*, which have both survived in two copies of virtually identical versions from 1615–16, namely in the autograph manuscript and in the printed *Praeludia*. A striking detail of the *Inferno* pavane is that it is given in the key of *E major* in the manuscript and one tone higher, in *F major*, in *Praeludia*. All in all, it is quite possible that works originating through improvisations, such as the *Lachrimae* variations, provided more opportunities for continual change than through-composed works such as the *Inferno* and *Paradiso* pavaues.

Jumping ahead to Nicolaes Vallet for a moment: we only have one of his works in two versions. In the first part of the *Secretum musarum* (1615), he published a *Pavanne en forme de complainte*, and a copy of this has also ended up in the Schele manuscript. The version in this manuscript is dedicated to Martin Dalem, who belonged to Van den Hove's circle, and the (Leiden?) copy is in Schele, dated 8 April 1614. This version, which is therefore about a year older than the published form, only differs from the latter in a few details.

### The lute books of Nicolaes Vallet

The other great composer of lute music in the Dutch Republic was Nicolaes Vallet. We saw that he came to Amsterdam around 1613 and lived there until the 1640s. Vallet, too, produced a series of lute books. The first part of his *Secretum musarum*, with secular music for lute solo, was published in 1615, as was the *Een en twintich psalmen Davids*, for voice and lute accompaniment. The second part of the *Secretum*, with mainly solo music, followed in 1616. And finally, in 1620, he published a bulky volume of religious music, the *Regia pietas*, in which all 150 psalms and five cantica were set for lute solo.

Vallet's publications differ considerably from Van den Hove's on a number of points. To start with, the texts of the preliminary pages in Vallet's books are not in scholarly Latin, but in the French and Dutch vernacular. The Latin title *Secretum musarum* is only assigned to his first volume in order to get away with an engraved title page, which was expensive, for the editions in both French and Dutch. The same probably applies to the Latin title *Regia Pietas*, although no copies of a Dutch version have survived; we only have the French version. This choice of languages probably had to do with the fact that Amsterdam, unlike Leiden, was not a university city. Although Vallet's books targeted the Dutch and international elites, they were less explicitly aimed at academics and intellectuals.

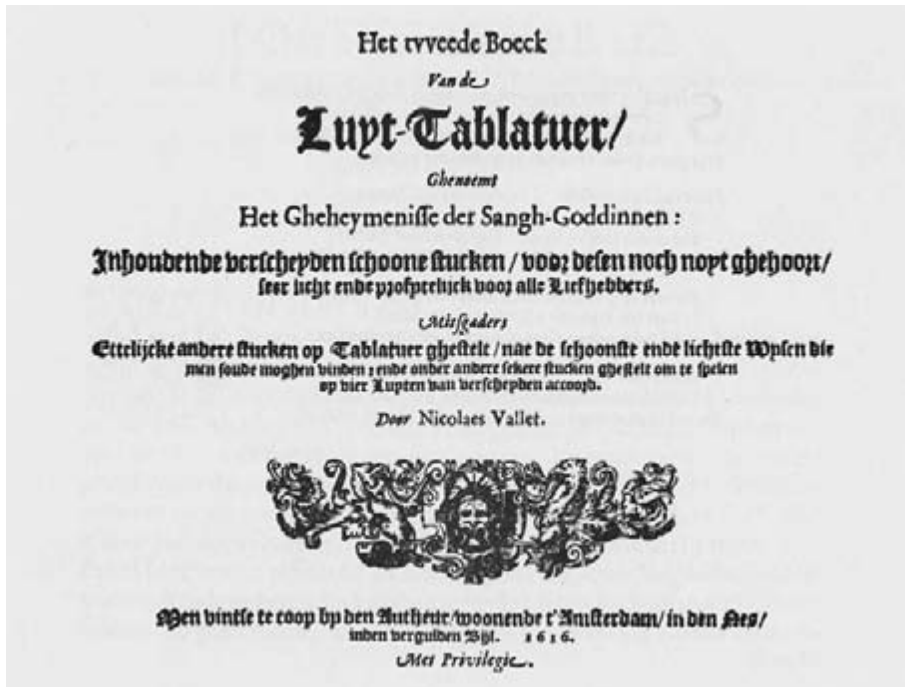
*The four lute books published by Vallet*

Vallet's books have a complicated publishing history. They were probably all published both in French and in Dutch, although these two languages were only relevant to the preliminary matter and the index, and not to the engraved music. *Secretum I* and *Regia Pietas* have an engraved title page in Latin, which could serve for both the French and Dutch versions. Moreover, the first three books were republished after a few years, the French versions at least.

1. *Secretum Musarum, in quo vera et genuina testudinem dextre simul et prompte pulsandi ratio ad amussim proponitur, Nicolao Valletto auctore.* Amsterdam: Jan Janszoon, 1615. – Dutch secondary title, translated from the Latin: *Het gheheymenisse der Zang-Godinnen: waer in levendich wort vertoont de rechte maniere om wel en veerdichlijck op de Luyt te spelen. [...] Men vintse te koop by Nicolaes Vallet, wonende in de Nes in de vergulde Bijl.* [The secrets of the Muses of Song, in which is shown clearly the right way to play skilfully on the lute. [...] They are for sale with Nicolaes Vallet, living in the Nes, in The Gilded Axe]

A second version, 1618, with altered title page: *Paradisus musicus Testudinis, in quo multae insignes et ante hunc diem inauditae, Gallicae, Germanicae, Anglicae, Hispanicae, Polonicae, cantiones; nec non varia praeludia, Fantasiae, Tripudia continentur: praeterea punctis tum supra tum ad latus singulis cuiusque tactus literis adscriptis, eorumque praemissa explicatione, docetur quibus tum dextrae tum sinistrae manus digitis chorda tangenda pulsandare sit, Auctore Nicolao Valletto. Omnia in aes incisa.* Amsterdam: Jan Janszoon, 1618. [The musical paradise of the lute, which includes many eminent songs as yet unheard from France, Germany, England, Spain and Po-





land, as well as various preludes, fantasies and dances; moreover, points have been given both above and alongside the individual letters of each bar, with prior explanations of which fingers to use for the strings, for both right and left hand, by the author Nicolaes Vallet. Everything engraved in copper.] See the illustration on p. 57.

2. *Een en twintich Psalmen Davids, ghestelt om te singhen ende spelen, 'tsamen, door Nicolaes Vallet.* Amsterdam, 1615. The French version: *Vingt et un Pseaumes de David, accommodés pour chanter & jouer du Luth ensemble. Par Nicolas Vallet.* The French version was reprinted in 1619: *XXI Pseaumes de David, accommodés pour chanter & jouer du Luth ensemble. Par Nicolas Valet.* Amsterdam: Jan Janszoon, 1619.v

3. *Het tweede Boeck van de Luyt-Tablatuer, ghenoemt Het gheheymnisse der Sangh-Goddinnen: inhoudende verscheyden schoone stucken, voor desen noch noyt ghehoort, seer licht ende profytelijck voor alle Liefhebbers. Mitsgaders ettelijcke andere stucken op Tablatuer ghestelt, nae de schoonste ende lichtste Wysen die men soude moghen vinden: ende onder andere sekere stucken ghestelt om te spelen op vier Luyten van verscheyden accoord. Door Nicolaes Vallet. [...] Men vintse te coop by den Autheur, woonende t'Amsterdam, in de Nes, inden vergulden Bijl. [Amsterdam] 1616.* The French version: *Le second Livre de Tablature de Luth; intitulé Le Secret des Muses: contenant plusieurs belles pieces non encor ouyes par ci-devant, fort faciles & utiles pour tous amateurs. Ensemble plusieurs autres pieces mises en Tablature selon la mode plus belle, & plus facile qui se puisse trouver,*



*entrautres quelques pieces mises pour jouer a quatre Luts differemment accordez. Par Nicolas Vallet. [...] On les trouve chez l'auteur demeurant au Nesse, a l'enseigne de la hache d'Or. 1616.* [The second book with lute tablature, called *The Secret of the Muses of Song*, containing several beautiful pieces which have never been heard before, very easy and useful for all amateurs. Furthermore several other pieces in tablature after the most beautiful and easy manners one may find; among those some pieces arranged to be played on four lutes in different tunings. By Nicolaes Vallet [...] It is sold by the author, living in Amsterdam, in Nes, in The Gilded Axe.] Reprinted in 1619 by Jan Janszoon, with an identical title page, although in a new typeset.

4. *Regia Pietas. Hoc est Psalmi Davidici concinne aptati ad modulantes fides. Authore Nicolao Valletto.* The second (or first) frontispiece: *Piété Royale. C'est a dire: les cent cinquante Pseaumes de David, accommodez pour jouer sur le luth, d'une nouvelle et tres-facile mode, non encore veue ny ouye par cy devant. Par Nicolas Vallet. [...] On les vend chez l'Autheur demeurant sur le Lely-Graft, à l'enseigne de la Bastille. Amsterdam, 1620.* [Royal piety. That is: the 150 Psalms of David, adapted for playing on the lute in a new and very simple way, never before seen or heard. By Nicolaes Vallet. [...] It is available from the author, who lives at Leliegracht, under the arms of the Bastille.] It is possible that a Dutch version has not survived.



The second marked difference is Vallet's use of engravings for the tablature instead of the traditional type. The advantage is immediately eye-catching, as the result is much finer and clearer than Van den Hove's books, for instance. Furthermore, it offered Vallet the possibility of including a refined system of performance signs in the tablatures, of both ornaments and fingering indications for the left and right hand. We will take a closer look at this musical aspect further on (p. 141). One evident disadvantage, however, is that an engraved page would have been more expensive than an old-fashioned typeset one, meaning that Vallet was put to great expense.

The musicologist Simon Groot has researched how Vallet came up with the innovative idea of engraved music. In 1501, the Venetian Ottaviano Petrucci printed the first books of polyphonic music, and shortly afterwards he also produced lute tablatures. The music printing procedure was adapted in 1528 by the Parisian Pierre Attaignant, whereby music (including tablature) consisted of individual notes (or tablature letters) set in type on a short section of a staff. With meticulous work, this method produces a usable notation, but if the lines of the staff do not join up well, it creates a messy whole that can be difficult to read in the worst cases.



Johannes Sadeler, David at prayer, depicting the composition *Laude pia Dominum* by Andreas Pévernage.  
Engraving (picture motet), c.1589



In the course of the 16th century, another typographical technique took off, namely engraving. An engraving nib was used to etch lines into a plate in mirror image, after which the plate was inked so that an impression could be made. This technique was used for book illustrations and individual prints and maps. In Italy, a lute book was published that was printed using this technique, namely *Intabolatura da leuto* by Francesco da Milano (c.1536), though that was to remain a one-off experiment.

A copper engraving was published in Antwerp in 1584, depicting the ‘St Anne Trinity’, the Virgin Mary with the Christ Child and her mother Anne. A striking and completely new element of the print is the incorporation of a motet by Cornelis Verdonck in the picture, above the heads of the three figures. This is the first time that music notation was printed using the technique of copper engraving. The fully legible music – to the words of *Ave gratia plena* – is depicted as an opened choir book, including the curves of the pages. Such picture motets started to appear more frequently after this, always with Roman Catholic sacred music to Latin texts, in close affinity with the picture. A picture motet was also printed in Leiden, in the 1590s, with music by Cornelis Schuyt.

Vallet must have been aware of the phenomenon, as Groot discovered that on the title engraving of his volume *Regia Pietas* (Amsterdam 1620), there is an illustration that is clearly inspired by one of the aforementioned Antwerp picture motets (King David, c.1589). One of the singers depicted on the original engraving has been turned a quarter on this title page and given Vallet’s face and a lute in his hands. On the music stand is the music of a canon for four voices. Here, of course, it is not a Roman Catholic motet, but – corresponding to the contents of the *Regia Pietas* – a psalm: number 117: *Toutes gens louez le Seigneur*. In the centre beneath this illustration is the title of the volume, and in the corners of each side we find the four parts of psalm 81: *Chanter gayement a Dieu nostre force*. Vallet’s decision to paraphrase the Antwerp picture motet with the kneeling David was undoubtedly prompted by the content of his lute volume: all 150 of David’s psalms in an arrangement for lute solo. Music is also depicted on the title engraving of Vallet’s first volume, the *Secretum musarum* of 1615, this time one of his own canons.

Vallet’s example of engraved music failed to catch on, and most music – including lute music – continued to be printed in the old-fashioned way. It was only at the end of the 17th century that the technique of printing music using copper engraving began to take hold, and it more or less supplanted the old techniques in the eighteenth century.

Apart from the presentation, the content of Vallet’s books differs greatly from that of his Leiden predecessor. With regard to the secular works for lute solo, these differences become clear when we compare the arrangement of Vallet’s *Secretum* with that of Van den Hove’s *Florida* and *Delitiae*.

Contents of the two parts of the *Secretum musarum*:

*Secretum I*:

Directions for lute-playing

14 preludes	pp. 1-8
5 fantasias	9-18
2 pavaues	19-20
2 intabulations	21-22
4 passamezzi	23-30
5 galliards	31-40
5 song variations	41-50
5 balletti	51-54
3 bourrées	55-56
4 variations	57-60
29 courantes and 1 sarabande	61-86
5 voltas and 1 galliard	87-90
5 song variations and 1 branle	91-94

*Secretum II*:

9 balletti	1-5
2 bourrées	5-6
5 song variations	6-9
2 branles with variations	10-14
5 courantes	15-18
4 miscellaneous long pieces	19-29
7 works for four lutes	30-47
Variations on 'Onse Vader in hemelryck'	48-50

The arrangement is slightly freer than that in Van den Hove's books. Vallet, too, begins with 'abstract pieces': preludes and fantasies. But then he continues in a different vein. Whereas Van den Hove intabulated a great many vocal works for the lute, we only find two works in that genre in Vallet's case, based on psalm settings by Claude le Jeune. As far as the dances are concerned, it is clear that Vallet is far more oriented towards the French repertoire than Van den Hove, which is not surprising, given his origins. Works based on Italian and English material, especially passamezzi, pavaues and galliards, are fewer in number in Vallet's case, and they follow the preludes and fantasies. Vallet also has fewer allemandes, which are placed in between the variation works. The traditional dance forms are followed by the more modern French dances, such as courantes, branles and bourrées, of which Vallet includes many more than Van den Hove, who included no bourrées at all. There is a remarkably large number of courantes, in which the new French style with the light texture is dominant. In some sections, Vallet distributes variations on well-known songs and dance tunes in between the dances. These variations are more numerous and slightly more elaborated than those of Van den Hove. Vallet is following the general trend with many of



Nicolaes Vallet, *Secretum musarum II*, p. 30 and 31 with a Ballet for lute quartet. As was customary, two parts are written upside down, so that four musicians could play from one book by putting it in the middle of a table and sitting around it

these differences, as the number of intabulations and passamezzi also decreased in foreign lute books in the 1610s. Incidentally, many of the elements seen in Vallet's books also appear in Van den Hove's last collection, the Berlin autograph, though to a lesser extent.

Unlike Van den Hove, who included several works by other lutenists in his books more or less unchanged, the *Secretum* contains only one work by someone else, namely a fantasia by L'Espine, and that only because Vallet follows it with a – very successful – 'Response': a response composed by himself in the same key. It is difficult to estimate the extent to which the numerous courantes and other dance tunes from the French repertoire were set by Vallet himself. However, he probably did compose the settings of and variations on Dutch, English and French melodies, given their uniform style. It would appear that Vallet based his choice of songs on their popularity in the Netherlands. Even though partly foreign in origin, *Boerinneken*, *Soet Robbert*, *Malle Symen*, *Slaep soete slaep* and *Onder de Lindegroene* were all popular melodies, which were frequently used for new text settings in song books. The same applies to *Une jeune Fillette* and *Fortune belas pourquoi*, for example, and to courantes like *L'avignonne* and *La durette*.

There is an interesting setting of *Onse Vader in hemelryck*, placed prominently as the final piece of the *Secretum*, and therefore a substantial composition, based on the Lutheran melody of the *Vater unser*, or the Lord's Prayer. The work consists of five variations, of which the first is a simple homophonic harmonisation of the melody. In the following four variations, the melody appears twice in the upper voice, then in the tenor, and finally in the bass. The third variation is a duet and the fourth a trio. Although such elements appear more often in variation works, this arrangement is strongly reminiscent of a setting of the same melody by Joachim van den Hove. Van den Hove's version is in the Berlin autograph, in the part of the manuscript that can be dated at the end of 1614 or beginning of 1615; in other words, well before the publication of part two of the *Secretum*. Vallet may have been familiar with the setting by the older master and used it as the basis for his own work.

Next to each composition in the *Secretum* is indicated how many courses (pairs of strings) are needed on the lute in order to play the piece, or, in other words, how many extra bass strings are recommended. Beside the first piece, for instance, Vallet has written *Prelude A 9*. The music is apparently written for seven to ten courses, and most of it requires a nine-course lute. Vallet and Van den Hove are alike in this, as the later works of the latter also require a lute with that number of courses.

Besides the largely secular music in both parts of the *Secretum*, Vallet also published two books of psalm settings. In this, he differs once more from Van den Hove, in whose production sacred music occupies a very subordinate place. The *Een en twintich psalmen Davids* was published in 1616, also in a French version. As before, only the title page and preliminary matter were in both languages, and the music – engraved in copper – is the same in both versions. Soon afterwards, Vallet sold the copper plates, along with those of the two parts of the *Secretum*, to the Amsterdam publisher Jan Janszoon, who republished the three books in 1618 and 1619. In view of the large numbers of surviving examples of these books printed by Jan Janszoon, the publisher must have taken a more professional approach to matters than Vallet did. The 21 psalms were composed in a setting for voice, which sang the melody of the psalm (after the Geneva Psalter), with a lute accompaniment. The two voices are notated in score, so that singers could accompany themselves. It is not completely clear why Vallet restricted himself to 21 psalms, although the simplest explanation would be for economical reasons. The book has 50 pages of tablature (for which an equal number of copper engravings had to be made), which is as many as the second part of the *Secretum*. More engravings would probably have been too expensive. Incidentally, it is interesting that he initially planned to publish all 150 psalms. This intention is stated in the patent application he lodged with the States General, probably in 1614, as well as in the text of the granted patent as printed in the first part of the *Secretum* (1615).

Vallet published these 150 psalms a few years later. The *Regia pietas*, once again financed by himself, came out in 1620. This publication includes all 150 psalms and a few sacred songs, this time set for lute solo, which are supplemented by a few preludes. It is a fat volume of 169 pages and, like Vallet's previous books, it is engraved, so the production costs would have been very high. Vallet was probably able to realise this project only with the help of six 'sponsors'; members of affluent Amsterdam families, who each had a page of the book, displaying their family crest, dedicated to them in recognition of their generosity. These sponsors were the aforementioned Mathijs van Beek, Lubbert van Axel, Michiel van Eijck, Jacomo Pauw, Jeronimus Joriszoon Waephelier and Guillaume Bartelot le jeune. They each paid for several plates, varying in number from six to eighteen. This covered the cost of around a third of the total number of copper engravings, and Vallet paid for the rest himself.

Although the psalms are set so that they can be played as lute solos, it appears from the foreword in the volume ('Advertissement aux amateurs de ce present livre') that Vallet intended the psalm melody to be sung along with the lute. Vallet must have assumed that these melodies were known, as he has not notated them next to the tablature. The only clue he gives the singer is



Nicolaes Vallet, *Een en twintich psalmen Davids*, p. 11 with the start of the setting of Psalm 25 for voice and lute

that in the second, strongly diminutioned section of each setting, which does contain the melody (although divided into small note values), he indicates by asterisks beneath the tablature line *when* a new melody note comes (but not *which* note that is).

Taking an overall view of Vallet's oeuvre for lute solo, we can agree with Louis Grijp's opinion that 'he was not a great melody-maker, but he succeeded in bringing out the sound potential of his instrument to the full while displaying a fine sense of harmony'. On the basis of a few hand-written copies of his compositions and the distribution of the surviving examples, we can conclude that his work was distributed mainly towards the east, while a few examples of the *Regia pietas* ended up in England. But as we saw, Vallet drew his musical inspiration, like all musicians in the Netherlands in this period, from the south and the west: from Italy, England and particularly France.

### *Valerius' Nederlandtsche Gedenck-clanck*

If one opens the *Nederlandtsche Gedenck-clanck* by Adriaen Valerius (Haarlem 1626) at a random page, one stands a good chance of seeing music notation straight away. And yet it is not a song-book, but a history book, in which the narrative is interspersed with relevant engravings, proverbs and songs. Rather than trying to give an objective historical account, Valerius was aiming at a historical story with political overtones. As the Twelve Year Truce (1609-1621) drew to an end, he was afraid that the people of the Netherlands would no longer embrace the fight against the

Spanish with their former vigour. So he wanted to remind them of the atrocities committed by the Spaniards. As a history book, the *Nederlandtsche Gedenck-clanck* is of little significance. Valerius copied virtually all his information from earlier publications. Nowadays, the work's importance lies mainly in the melodies and their corresponding settings for lute and cittern.

Adriaen Valerius (c.1575-1625) did not write the melodies for his songs himself. In keeping with contemporary custom, he wrote new rhyming texts to existing and usually well-known melodies. Valerius, by the way, was neither a musician nor a poet, but a businessman, and the poetry was a form of recreation (although probably quite important to him). From 1598, he was a member of the 'Missus Scholieren' chamber of rhetoric in his hometown of Veere, and was elected its president in 1617. His songs are rather good verses, which always fit the melodies very well.

It is interesting that Valerius had the melodies printed to all the songs. The current version of the *Wilhelmus*, the Dutch national anthem, is based on the melody given in the *Gedenck-clanck*. Most 17th-century songbooks made do with references to the tune, and the melodies were only printed in full for a few lesser-known songs. In Valerius' publication, each song is also set to a different melody, which is unique among the Dutch songbooks of the Golden Age. Valuable to studies of the song culture of the period is the fact that Valerius wrote down not only the melodies, but also the references to the tunes. He has even included an index of references at the front of his book: the *Tafel van de Stemmen ofte Voysen in desen Boeck begrepen* [Table of the voices included in this book]. The melodies are not listed in alphabetical order, but according to dance form and origin: *Almanden*, *Baletten*, *Branslen*, *Fransche Couranten*, *Pavananen*, *Fransche voisen*, *Engelsche stemmen*, *Italiaensche stemmen* and *Nederlandsche Stemmen*. This table shows once again the international character of the Dutch song culture of the 17th century; moreover it demonstrates that people were well aware of the fact, although Valerius does get the origin wrong once in a while.

Although Valerius may have notated some melodies by ear, it is clear that he made regular use of printed or hand-written sources, in which he found notations of the melodies. Besides songbooks (particularly Starter's *Friesche Lust-hof*) and part books of polyphonic music (including works by Gastoldi, who was also very popular in the Dutch Republic), he also used lute books in some cases. At least one of Valerius' French melodies, namely the song '*Tgerween, 'tgehuyl, 'tgekryt*', to the composition *Ci ceste malheureuse bande* by Pierre Guédron, appears to have been based on the notation in *Airs de differents auteurs, mis en tablature de luth par Gabriel Battaille* (fifteen volumes, Paris 1608-1632). Valerius also used two songs from John Dowland's *The first Booke of Songes or Ayres* (London 1597).

Important to us are the lute and cittern settings following the melodies. The tablature is far from error-free, which is probably due largely to the ineptitude of the typesetter. We see the classic errors in copying tablature: letters placed one line too high or too low, swapped around, left out or misplaced through bad alignment in the case of notes played at the same time. Even more remarkable are the errors in the content. Apart from the fact that the melody and lute part are usually in different keys (this happened quite often, and the singer then simply adapted to the lute), there is the fact that many lute settings do not fit the given song melodies properly. In



Tafel van de Stemmen ofte Voyfen in deſen Boeck begrepen.									
<i>Almanden.</i>	<i>Folio</i>	<i>d'Elaigne</i>	258	Engeliſche ſoolle, of: <i>Wolſch</i>		<i>Sonnetti un balletto</i>	278		
<i>Guerre Guerre gey</i>	74	<i>Pafcomere d'Anvers.</i>	222	<i>Waelſchmehen</i>	33	<i>Dimmi ché del mio core.</i>	290		
<i>Prins du Parma</i>	114	<i>Franchi voyſen.</i>		<i>Noa, noa,</i>	34	<i>Nederlaſche ſtemmen.</i>			
<i>Nonnette</i>	120			<i>Cobbeler, of: het Engeliſch</i>					
<i>Kits</i>	124	<i>La Mœſique</i>	35	<i>Kapperhen.</i>	62	<i>Salick noch langer met heere</i>			
<i>Pekelharing, of Potsdam</i>		<i>La Dolybioce</i>	40	<i>Farwel, of: Wamere ſch</i>		<i>tranen</i>	16		
<i>Deer</i>	222	<i>La Valette</i>	42	<i>Soet Robbert</i>	83	<i>Studeeren dans</i>	25		
<i>Mary Hofmans</i>	266	<i>Si ceſte malheureuſe bande</i>	50	<i>Bata voſtres drom</i>	110	<i>Wilhelmus van Naſſouwe</i>	46		
<i>Montieur</i>	286	<i>Quand la Bergerie</i>	86	<i>Out loen, met den Was.</i>	126	<i>Maximilianus de Beſſa</i>	58		
<i>Balletten.</i>	30, 78, 80, 202	<i>La Romanes</i>	108	<i>Fortuyn</i>	132	<i>Hoort allegaer in't openbaer</i>	65		
<i>Marignault</i>	292	<i>La Borée</i>	147	<i>Gallier ſuit Margrit</i>	142	<i>Gly die my met u beſefge-</i>			
<i>Franchen</i>	32, 37	<i>Gaillarde Belle</i>	160	<i>The Clocke dauns</i>	152	<i>laer</i>	70		
<i>Franchi Couranten.</i>	26, 32	<i>La Vignone met de Was</i>	174	<i>d'Engeliſche min, of: Boech</i>		<i>Snaches doen een blaſe gefar-</i>			
<i>Si ceſt pour mon pucelage</i>	94	<i>Et ce le grand Dieu des</i>		<i>keſich ſin beſchiet</i>	157	<i>de kloer</i>	70		
<i>Duette</i>	112	<i>Alarmes</i>	264	<i>Com again metten Was</i>	166	<i>Het was een ryck mans bor-</i>			
<i>Serbande</i>	238	<i>Une jeune ſilone</i>	180	<i>Wodde od</i>	198	<i>gers noon</i>	164		
<i>Seigneur</i>	250	<i>L'ocingo</i>	294	<i>Malin, metten Was</i>	206	<i>Hey! wolder dan wilt</i>	170		
<i>O Angenierje</i>	270	<i>Franchi Gaillarde</i>	189	<i>Prins Japhoe</i>	212	<i>Wincken daer het boſch</i>			
<i>De Mey die komt ons by</i>	282	<i>Quand ce beau printemps</i>		<i>Com ſharphedern.</i>	222	<i>van drit</i>	192		
<i>Pavane.</i>		<i>je voy</i>	234			<i>Pes hondert duyſent, of:</i>			
<i>Medelyn</i>	98	<i>La picquarde</i>	242	<i>Italiensche ſtemmen.</i>		<i>Almande Philippi</i>	222		
<i>Philippi metten Was</i>	136	<i>Gaillarde Maurice</i>	254	<i>Sei tamo gratioſo</i>	103	<i>O Herre greeſt, ſoo lange</i>			
<i>Lachme, metten Was</i>	216	<i>Engeliſche ſtemmen.</i>		<i>Queſta dolce Sirena</i>	262	<i>leef</i>	225		
		<i>Engeliſche daphne</i>	30	<i>Clu guezregiar deſia</i>	274	<i>Comedianen dans.</i>	247		
						<i>Schoonſte Nymfhe van het</i>			
						<i>Wout.</i>	234		

Valerius, *Nederlandsche Gedenck-clanck*, index of melodies

fact, most of the lute parts appear to be solo pieces. It seems more than likely that Valerius simply copied the melodies and lute works (most of which were familiar to him) just as he had found them. This is also shown by an English composition with the clearly instrumental title *Mrs. Mary Hofmans Almand* as its 'reference', and for example by the version with diminutions that follows the simple setting of *Engelsche Fortuyn* in the lute part. There are also two interesting trios for three different lutes, to the *Pavane d'Espagne* and *Almande Monsieur*. There are only seven songs where the lute setting may have been specially written for the *Gedenck-clanck* by Valerius himself, or by a lutenist he engaged to do so. In this group, the lute part follows the song melody much more closely than in other cases. In four of them, the melody and lute part are also in the same key (based on a lute tuned in G).

A few pieces corresponding to these lute settings can be found in the now familiar Dutch lute books of Adriaenssen, Van den Hove and Vallet, but these concordances are practically never verbatim, so Valerius did not copy the pieces from these examples. The one exception to this rule is the *Pavane Philippi*, originally composed by the Englishman Peter Phillips, of which the first two sections are an exact copy of the setting in Van den Hove's *Florida*, although the third section is different again. Remarkably, two lute settings in the *Gedenck-clanck* are very similar to the pieces in the Thysius Lute Book, although it is unlikely that Valerius consulted this manuscript, as there are no indications that he knew the owner, Adriaen Smout. These concordances will have come about because these similar settings hark back to a common source.

The style of the lute pieces in the *Gedenck-clanck* is similar to some works by Van den Hove from the 1610s: simple settings of popular melodies, alongside modern French dances, par-

**GEDENCK-CLANCK.** 127

De Prins

Valerius, *Nederlandsche Gedenck-clanck*, p. 127, the end of the bass part of *Quaet groeyt in groot getal*, to the melody of *Engels Oud Ioen*, followed by the lute and cittern parts

ticularly courantes. Here we are probably looking at a wide cross-section of the anonymous lute repertoire circulating in the Dutch Republic in the second decade of the century, in the way the Thysius Lute Book includes the repertoire of around 1600.

The cittern settings, which are mediocre in quality, were probably created by Valerius himself, or otherwise by a musical assistant from his circle. They do, however, follow the melody of the songs notated in the *Gedenck-clanck* fairly accurately. The key of the melody and the cittern setting is also the same in nearly all cases, even when the pitch of the melody is very high and a transposition would seem logical. If the melody is then in an awkward key for the cittern, the musical result is rather dubious. The cittern parts were apparently made for the melodies as collected by Valerius, as a real accompaniment to them.

It is striking that the lute and cittern music in Valerius' *Nederlandtsche Gedenck-clanck* (Haarlem 1626) are set in the same typeface in which Van den Hove's *Florida* was printed in Utrecht in 1601. A different typeface is used for Van den Hove's next book, *Delitiae* (Utrecht 1612), which is also used for Van den Hove's *Praeludia* (Leiden 1616) and for the publication a year later in Arnhem of the *Testudo spiritualis continens psalmos Davidis*, a volume of psalm settings for lute composed by the Hessian lawyer Daniel Laelius. Even more remarkable is the fact that this same typeface was used again in 1631 for a North-German music book, namely *Le petit bouquet de Frise orientale*, published by Louis de Moy. We know that from 1619, De Moy was employed as a musician by the successive Counts of East Friesland, Enno III, Rudolf Christaan and Ulrich II. In his book, he published songs with lute accompaniment, dances for two viols and lute, and a number of dances, mainly courantes, for ten-course lute solo. The latter are partly his own compositions, and partly those of the well-known French composers of the day. We do not know where the book was published. The title page states only that it was published at De Moy's own expense.

The considerable production of lute books in the Dutch Republic in the first two decades of the 17th century is even more remarkable for the fact that there was not really much activity in the area of music publishing at the time. Nevertheless, these lute volumes were clearly in demand, particularly towards the east, as is shown by the sale of Van den Hove's books to German buyers. Straight after their publication, *Florida*, *Delitiae* and *Praeludia* were offered for sale at the Frankfurt and Leipzig *Buchmesse*, and *Florida* once again in 1614, and *Praeludia* again as late as 1637. And the books by Vallet, too, ended up in German libraries.

### *Nicolaes Vallet's playing instructions*

Vallet's first book, the *Secretum musarum I*, contains an introduction with instructions for playing the lute *om daer in korten tijd te geraken tot de ware kennisse van de rechte handelinge der Luyte* [in order to gain true knowledge in a short time of the right way of playing the lute]. This text is given in both the French and the Dutch versions (under the titles 'Petit Discours' and 'Kort Berecht', respectively). As we saw earlier, the French would have been the original text written by Vallet, and the Dutch is a translation. However brief it may be, the text offers valuable insight into Vallet's musical ideas and playing technique.

Vallet tells us that although many wise authors have already described the correct way of playing the lute, he is offering a new method. This was because those other methods often aimed too high, and were so scholarly that most amateurs and young people were put off by them. Vallet was probably referring here to the best-known lute method of his day, the tract 'De modo in testudine studendi libellus', which Jean-Baptiste Besard added to his large collection of lute music *Thesaurus harmonicus*, published in Cologne in 1603. Merely on account of the Latin in which it is written, this work would indeed have been rather inaccessible for many amateur lutenists, for which reason an English translation was published in the *Varietie of Lute-lessons*, published by Robert Dowland in 1610.

Vallet goes on to explain that his instructions are directed not so much at professional lutenists, but at amateur players. He says that young people studying in this country lack diligence and perseverance, but that with his method they can still easily get the hang of the instrument, even without the help of a teacher. The explanation continues with a description of the fingering signs for left and right hand in the tablature, which are all given in dots and dashes. One dot or two dashes *under* a tablature letter indicates that that note should be plucked with the right-hand index finger or middle finger respectively. One, two, three or four dots *next to* a letter give the fingers of the left hand that should press the strings on the fingerboard. This system of plucking and fingering is more detailed than usual in other lute books of the period, and the double dashes for the middle finger of the right hand was in fact an innovation. In the *Secretum*, however, Vallet only uses this system for a limited number of pages, and the rest gives less detailed instructions of just the dots for the right-hand index finger. We see the complete range of signs used mainly in the French music at the end of the book. So maybe it was these pieces that Vallet used in his teaching practice.

Vallet also explains some other performance instructions used in the tablature. An asterisk stands for a barré, and straight and curved lines mean that a note should be held for the length indicated, in order to avoid the lute sounding like *het gebayer der klokken* [the peal of bells]. These dashes and the fingering for the left hand sometimes show how Vallet wanted certain passages to be articulated, or instead to be played ‘legato’. Two other ornament directions are referred to as well: a sort of comma after the letter indicates a single grace note from above, and a cross means that this grace note should be plucked twice or three times; in other words, a trill. In his *Regia pietas*, published in 1620, Vallet gives yet another ornament sign, namely a double cross to indicate a vibrato. That should be executed by placing the finger of the left hand firmly on the fingerboard, and then shaking the whole hand back and forth as quickly as possible.

And finally, it is interesting that in his instructions, Vallet explicitly writes that when plucking the strings, the right-hand thumb should be placed outside the hand, and not inside. Although non-experts will wonder what this means and why it is significant, this information is of great importance to lute players. Most lutenists today play with the thumb held inside, following the method used in the 16th century, which means that the right hand is held more or less parallel to the strings. Positioning the thumb outside the hand, as propagated by Vallet, as well as by the aforementioned Besard and Dowland, means that the hand is placed to an increasing extent at right angles to the strings, more like the position used in modern guitar technique. This twisting of the right hand produces a different playing position and way of plucking, with correspondingly fundamental consequences for performance technique and for the sound produced. At the same time, people started playing quick passages by alternating the middle finger and index finger, rather than the thumb and index finger, as before. This is shown clearly in Vallet’s *Secretum*, in the pieces where he gives both the single dots for the index finger and the double dash for the middle finger. This applies to the quick passages in the upper voice. For runs in the bass line, he only gives the single dots for the index finger, which is apparently used there in alternation with the thumb.



Playing position with the thumb inside the hand. Detail from Cornelis Cort, *Musica* (Music) (see p. 11)



Playing position with the thumb outside the hand. Gerard Terborch, *The concert* (1657). Paris, Louvre



Il se faut aussi garder de se servir a tous coups du poulce touchant les frettes, et principalement le recourbant au dedans de la main, comme plusieurs inezerts font encor pour le Jourdhuy, qui est une lourde et ridicule faulle. Car le poulce doit toujours requiescer en dehors et non pas courir au dedans de la main, voila ce qui Cause le mouvement de tout le corps, et souvent force grimaces. Venons au signe figure ainsi, c'est celui qui donne toute la grace et l'harmonie, et enrichit tout le jeu, en étant Comme s'en suit-

**E X E M P L E**



Je pourrois, encor amener plusieurs autres exemples lesquelles ne serviroient icy que pour observer et ennuier, d'autant qu'en nous voy les principales, finalement le sixiesme signe ou marque sous celle figure, est semblable a la precedente, sauf, qu'il faut redoubler a tirer la corde de la main gauche soit deux ou trois fois, spécialement quand la marque susdite est posée sous une note noire suivie d'un point et d'une croche, ou bien aussi d'une blanche.

**E X E M P L E**



Ces deux derniers signes (ou pour mieus dire l'ornement du luth) sont fort peu pratiques en plusieurs endroits et notamment en ces quartiers parquoy (dénings les lecteurs) si vous plaira les observer Tant pour vostre avancement que pour en rendre suffisant témoignage.

**Vivez Heureux**

Page from Vallet's *Secretum musarum* I, with the last page of the 'Petit discours', the French version of the playing instructions. As this text contains tablature examples, it was not typeset like the rest of the preliminary matter, but was engraved as well

This alternation between middle finger and index finger is also prescribed by Besard and Dowland in their playing instructions mentioned earlier, though they still recommend using the thumb and index finger for the melody passages with no underlying bass, where the thumb is thus 'free'. It is not known how Joachim van den Hove played with the right hand, as there are no surviving technical instructions by him and his music contains only the single dot to indicate plucking with the index finger. Maybe he was one of the 'older players, Dutch and older Germans' who still used the old playing method, as described in a manuscript of around 1619, in which the German composer and lutenist Johann Stobäus propagates the new playing technique.

Stobäus did so on the basis of an ideal related to sound. Played in the old way, with the thumb inside, he thought the lute sounded 'very monotonous and muted', while playing the instrument with the new technique with the thumb outside produced a 'clearer and sharper' sound. For Vallet, the choice of the new playing method with the thumb outside was apparently prompted by other aesthetic motives. According to him, playing with the thumb inside the hand resulted in the players 'having no grace whatsoever in their playing, as they are forced to use the whole arm, and often all the limbs of the body, in a uniform movement, whereby some players stick out their tongue and others pull disagreeable faces. And that is an ugly and ridiculous flaw, as the thumb should always stick upwards and not downwards' (*gans geen gratie hebben in tspelen, overmits sy gedwongen sijn geheel den arm, ende dickmaels alle de leden des lichaems te roeren al met eenderley beweginge, sommige de tong uyt stekende, andere makende een deel onaangename gebaerde,*



*'t welck een leelycke ende belachelycke faut is; want de duim moet altyd opwaerts buygen ende niet nederwaerts*). It is indeed possible that players using the old technique moved the whole arm, but all the other movements and grimaces he refers to do not appear directly related to the plucking technique. It is clear, however, that Vallet attached importance to a dignified and relaxed posture while playing.

## CHAPTER 7

### Infrastructure: Lute Building and the Lute Trade

Wherever the lute is played by many people, all sorts of provisions are necessary to enable them to do so. At the most basic level, it must be possible to buy an instrument and the strings required for it. So this raises the question of how lutenists in the 17th century, both professionals and amateurs, came by their instruments and their strings. As is so often the case, our information is provided once again by the correspondence of Constantijn Huygens, along with archival sources.

In the 17th century, just as today, there would in principle have been two ways of obtaining a lute: ordering a new one from a lute maker or looking for an available second-hand instrument in the circuit of fellow lute players. The latter method has the disadvantage that the lute is not brand-new and may have hidden defects, but the advantage is that the instrument has already been played in and can be approved beforehand, both by the buyer and by impartial experts. Judging by the available documentation, both methods seem to have been in use in the Dutch Republic.

#### *The lute trade*

Let us begin with the lute trade, and in particular with Constantijn Huygens' attempts to purchase lutes. He was continually searching abroad, and then expressly for old instruments and not those made to order. He was mostly after antique lutes from Bologna (Plate 16), by renowned builders like Laux Maler and Hans Frei, who were both German by birth and made great numbers of lutes in Italy in the first half of the 16th century. Huygens was not alone in this preference for Bolognese lutes. Another well-to-do Dutchman, the aforementioned Joan Thijs, had bought an instrument by Laux Maler in 1648 for 80 guilders, and the professional lutenist Jacques Gaultier also played a Maler. In 1622 Huygens met Gaultier on his third visit to England, and he was to remain in contact with him, also as a middleman, in his attempts to get hold of a good lute.



Jan Lievens, *Portrait of Jacques Gaultier*. Etching, c.1630-33. The engraving is done in mirror image, so that the lute is represented incorrectly, with the bass strings on the wrong side of the instrument. An engraving is usually the mirror image of the painting on which it is based. The painting in this case has not survived

Jacques Gaultier (c.1600–1652) was a famous French lutenist, who spent a great deal of his life in the service of the English king. He was, incidentally, no relation of the prominent lutenists Ennemond and Denis Gaultier. He was a colourful figure, who had to flee France in 1617 because of a duel with fatal consequences, and who was imprisoned in the Tower in England in 1627 because he had insulted the royal family, though he had been in their service since 1625.

In April 1645 Huygens commissioned Gaultier to find him a large Bolognese lute in London ‘with nine ribs’, from which the rounded back of the body is constructed. And in no time at all Gaultier had indeed found ‘absolutely the most beautiful and best lute from Bologna in England, just about the size you wanted’. The instrument could be sent on approval and was to fetch 30 pounds sterling. The part of local financial middleman was played by Frédéric Rivet, who decided to purchase the lute on condition that the instrument would be taken back if Huygens was not happy with it. We do not know whether Huygens was pleased or not, but we do know that the sale was called off because the price was too high. This was despite Rivet’s declaration that Gaultier himself played on a small Bolognese lute that had cost him 100 pounds when he bought it.

From then on, there is regular mention in Huygens’ correspondence of his search for old lutes. They did not necessarily have to be ready to play. It was more the body that interested him, as that ensured the required quality of sound. The neck was not important, as it would anyway have to be replaced by one with a wider fingerboard to accommodate the modern taste for ten to twelve courses. In July 1647 Huygens tried to get hold of an old lute body through acquaintances in Vienna. His informant, Hinrick Bielke from Münster, claimed there were plenty to be found there.

In the spring of 1648, Huygens was successful. At the beginning of April, he wrote to the famous Parisian music theoretician Father Marin Mersenne that an Englishman (whose name he does not mention) had sent him a beautiful large old Bolognese lute from France. Of the instrument he writes, ‘You can imagine how delighted I am with the gift. From its cavity comes the softest thunder (*le plus doux tonnerre*) that can be heard. I cannot describe it better to you. You still have not told me which shape of lute you think produces the best resonance and why. I know something of it from experience and that seldom deceives me. But my Archimedes [his son Christiaan Huygens] will get the job of constructing the theory of it’.

Nevertheless, six months later, in October, Pierre de la Barre was searching for another Bolognese lute for him in Paris. He wrote to Huygens saying he had found two of the right size. One was by Laux Maler, with nine ribs and of excellent sound, but rather old and damaged, with even a few cracks; the price was 10 *pistolen* at the most. The other was by Hans Frei, with nine ribs, much finer and less damaged than the first, which was currently having its neck attached by the owner, a lute maker called Lesselier.

It seems that Huygens did not take up this offer, as by November he was already in contact with the guitarist and composer Giovanni Paolo Foscari, who had understood that Huygens was interested in a small lute by Laux Maler. He said that he would be going to Italy in a few weeks’ time, where he had ‘a set of five lutes by Laux Maler from Bologna, which are so

well preserved that – despite being made many years ago – there is not the slightest defect to be found'. They were supposed to have been found in the household of the late Duke of Urbino. He was prepared to sell these lutes to Huygens. Foscarini, who had previously written to Huygens requesting him to mediate in an appointment at the court of Stadtholder Willem II and had accompanied the letter with some of his own compositions, had been turned down on that occasion. It seems that now he was trying to profit in another way from his contact with Huygens, namely by selling all sorts of goods to the rich Dutchman. In a few subsequent letters, from March and April 1649, he offered two more lutes for sale, this time by Frei, as well as a book of theorbo compositions in the French style, 'namely with *préludes*, *allemandes*, *courantes*, *gigues*, *sarabandes*, *chaconnes* and *passacailles*, which are sure to please you', and 'songs and compositions for the theorbo in the French style'. In view of his repeated complaint that Huygens did not reply to him, it would seem that once again Huygens did not take up the offers in the letters.

At the same time, Jacques Gaultier was stirring again. In the spring of 1649, he offered Huygens a lute by Laux Maler from Bologna, which had previously been owned by John Ballard, a former lutenist to the English king (from 1620 to 1626). Following Ballard's death, the instrument was bought from his surviving relatives by the king for no less than 100 pounds, after which Gaultier came into possession of the instrument. This is probably Gaultier's expensive Maler lute referred to earlier. He was asking the same amount the king had paid, as in his view the instrument was worth the high price. He offered Huygens the opportunity of first having it on approval, and he did indeed send it to him in August. But we do not know what happened to it. And in exactly the same period Thomas Willeboirts from Antwerp was busy on Huygens' behalf trying to extract a lute made by the unidentified 'Sieur Appels' from Mathijs Musson, agent of the Polish-Lithuanian Prince Janusz Radziwill (1612-1655); also with unknown result.

Then we hear nothing more about Huygens' lute hunt in his correspondence for a couple of decades, but in the year 1669, the theme suddenly arises again. Now his contact is Sébastien Chièze, who was to try and find Maler lutes, either in Madrid or through the Bolognese brothers Giulio and Guido Bovio. The latter obviously knew their trade well, as within a few weeks they wrote to Chièze that they had found two lutes: one with eleven ribs signed 'Laux Mouler', and one with nine ribs and a label on which only the letters '...ler' are legible. This instrument may therefore not have been by Laux Maler, but by his brother 'Christoforo' (whose real name, incidentally, was Sigismund). The first lute, an instrument with no neck, appeared to be a better instrument and of a more harmonious shape than the second. The Bovio brothers went on to say that Italian musicians do not rate Maler lutes as highly as those by Frei and those by someone else whose name they cannot recall for the moment. A month later, Chièze was able to tell Huygens that he had ordered both instruments to be sent to Christiaan Huygens in Paris, where necks could be made for them. He would also have people search in Bologna for other lutes, this time by Hans Frei.

We are left in the dark as to whether these two instruments ever reached Huygens. If they did, he may not have been happy with them, as a few months later, in July, some instruments Huygens had asked for were successfully picked up in Bologna. Giulio Bovio wrote to

Chièze that two suitable lutes had been found ‘in an old storehouse’. They had a fingerboard ‘in the French style’, and were already strung, so that Huygens could play them straight away. They were sent to Lyon in a fairly sturdy crate, following the same route as the first time. In August, Chièze wrote to Huygens that the instruments were on their way from Bologna to Paris, where Christiaan Huygens was to see to their onward despatch. He was also to decide whether or not they should be given new necks.

From the 1640s, Huygens appears to have spared neither effort nor money in getting hold of lutes by Laux Maler or other Bolognese builders such as Hans Frei. His letters tell us a lot about the various types of lutes and about what people regarded as a good lute. The specification of the number of ribs is striking. This would have determined the instrument’s sound quality to a certain extent. Huygens seems to have had a preference for nine ribs. Furthermore, he often expressed wishes regarding the size of a lute. In 1669, Huygens was going after two lutes from the estate of the Brandenburg statesman Fabian von Dohna (1617–1668), one small and one medium-sized instrument. He was particularly interested in the larger one, in order to convert it into a theorbo, ‘which I think will be more suitable than its present use, due to its dimensions, because as you know the fatter bellies are not so well suited to playing courantes and sarabandes as those dry and emaciated dancers you’ve seen at the French court pointing one or two feet into the air’.

Also of interest are the remarks of a leading lutenist like Jacques Gaultier about the lutes he had tried to procure for Huygens. In 1645 he wrote: ‘The lutes by Laux Maler, which are very rare (there are only around fifty in the whole world, and in England not even half a dozen), are usually medium-sized and not suited to accompanying singing. Other masters are Sigismond Maler and Hans Frei, which are greater in number, of larger size and with eleven ribs. Also suitable are the lutes by [Nicola] Sconvelt, of large size.’ He also had an opinion about the Maler lute he had available for Huygens in 1649:

The best way to compare it is to play it often. Then you will see that you will find no other that bears comparison with regard to its melody, its harmony, its loudness and its softness. Right by the bridge, where you place your little finger, a piece [of wood] has been affixed; not because there was once a hole there nor any other fracture, but precisely in order to prevent that happening. The soundboard is of the strongest wood and coarsest grain (*du plus fort et du plus gros grain*) to be found. I send it in rather sorry condition, as only the bass strings are fitted, as it has been for some time. But if it had been fully strung, all the strings would need to be loosened, so that the damp would not pull off the bridge.

Huygens was by no means alone in his search for lutes, judging by the aforementioned Maler lutes in the possession of an amateur like Joan Thijs (who probably did not even play the lute), and of a professional lutenist like Jacques Gaultier. Although Laux Maler had a large workshop and must have produced hundreds, if not thousands of instruments, it is certain that Italian suppliers in the 17th century committed fraud in finding ‘Maler lutes’, as it was easy enough to stick a fake label in an instrument. There are still some lutes in museums and private collections that



are thought to have a forged label with the name Laux Maler on it. In any case, it seems to have been suspiciously easy to find old Bolognese lutes in Italy with obscure antecedents ('in an old storehouse'). And the fact that the 17th-century market was not easily saturated is illustrated once more by the case of Huygens, who was not satisfied with one example, but kept on collecting these desirable instruments even though he did not want to pay the highest prices.

### *Luthiers in the Dutch Republic*

There is hardly any mention of lute makers' names in Huygens' correspondence, and none at all of Dutch builders. The products of craftsmen from his own country may not have met his quality requirements. Yet the Dutch archives provide plenty of information about lute, cittern and guitar makers, or instrument builders in general, although the sources are far from unequivocal in their references to professions. A person who is referred to once as a lute maker may be called an instrument maker on another occasion. But it goes without saying that not every instrument maker was a lute builder. That title could, of course, also refer to a maker of citterns or violins and viols, or even wind or keyboard instruments. And it gets even more complicated: someone who is once referred to as a lute maker may be called a cittern maker or even a violin maker further on. Such cases indicate that there was probably little question of specialisation. And we will indeed see that many instrument makers built and repaired both plucked and bowed instruments.

Our knowledge of instrument builders in the Dutch Republic is rather incomplete, as no structural research has been carried out into this professional group or into particular specialisations within that group. Most of our information comes from a few scattered publications based on ad hoc archive discoveries, particularly those by Christian Vlam about the Leiden builders and by Johan Giskes about those in Amsterdam. The latter also published a list of Amsterdam instrument makers. There is also a lot of material in gleanings from archives, either published or in hand-written notes, by people like Bredius, Servaas van Rooijen and Balfort. In all of these records, most of the attention is devoted to violin makers, as in past decades the violin was, of course, a more popular instrument than the lute. There were, moreover, a number of prominent violin makers working in the 17th century, particularly in Amsterdam. The following survey gives only a distorted view, as some municipal archives have been combed more thoroughly than others. Those in Amsterdam, Leiden and The Hague, in particular, seem to have had a good share of attention. But even in their cases, the research has been far from exhaustive.

Bearing that reservation in mind, it is quite surprising that we know of so many instrument makers, especially in the aforementioned cities of Amsterdam, Leiden and The Hague. They must have had a considerable clientele. It seems that many people played an instrument, and many players had a small collection of instruments, as we saw earlier. Often we know little more about these builders than a few references in the birth, marriage and death registers, and in the legal and notarial archives. In other words, all we know is their marital status and some facts surrounding their financial arrangements and disputes. Nevertheless, there are a few builders about whom we are better informed, even regarding their professional activities.

One example of someone we know a little more about is master Andries Asseling (also spelt Aslinck, Assele or Aslee). In 1607, he married Maria (Maritgen) Dircxdochter van Croonenburch in Leiden, and he came from 'Uytstede' in Pomerania. That is where he would have been born, around 1580. In 1625, he was said to be 42, but in 1647 he was 'around 70 years old'. Andries was already affluent early in life, as in 1602 he bought a property on the chic Rapenburg (nowadays no. 69) from Willem Corneliszoon van Duivenbode, the Leiden lutenist we came across earlier. Several children were born of this marriage, two of whom, Melchior and Hendrik, were to follow their father's profession. Andries Asseling died before July 1658. The sources occasionally shed light on his work as an instrument maker. In 1643, for instance, a certain master Jan, a musician, owed him f. 16 for the remainder of a payment for instruments supplied. In 1640, Andries received f. 2:10 for the adaptation of a cittern. But it is also illustrative how his profession is mentioned in the documents, even when these documents are not related to his professional activities. He is called a lute maker in 1614 and 1622, a cittern maker in 1615 and 1649, and an instrument maker in 1607, 1625, 1628 and 1649. As these descriptions cross one another, it shows again that Asseling worked with different stringed instruments, although it is of note that the term 'lute maker' only crops up in the first half of his career.

Most of what we know about Andries' professional practice comes from an exceptional document. In 1649, he was in negotiation with the guardians of Catharina van der Meulen, who was to marry his son Hendrik. As compensation for the dowry the bride would bring to the marriage, Asseling promised that besides the usual trousseau, he would provide his son with *alle het gereetschap dienende tot het maken van instrumenten* [all the tools necessary for making instruments]. For this purpose, he drew up a detailed inventory of his workshop with these tools, including his valuation of the items. The total came to the not inconsiderable sum of 500 guilders. The counterparty declared that they could not form a judgement on the contents of the inventory and the sums included in it, and that in this town there were no other instrument makers they could employ to provide the correct values. It would thus seem that Asseling had a virtual monopoly on instrument building in Leiden.

*The inventory drawn up by Andries Asseling of his workshop:*

First 12 moulds for moulding heads for citterns, at 6 guilders each, totalling	f. 72:-:-
10 pounds of varnish, at 6 guilders per pound, totalling	f. 60:-:-
140 screws, both large and small, at 5 stuivers each,	f. 35:-:-
4 metal planes, at 9 guilders each, totalling	f. 16:-:-
8 wooden planes, both large and small, at 24 stuivers each, totalling	f. 9:2:-
9 drills, on average at 16 stuivers each, totalling	f. 7:4:-
3 shooting benches, at 8 guilders each, totalling	f. 24:-:-
1 metal vice, up to 5 pounds,	f. 30:-:-
1 grinding stone and a flat grinding stone with bench, totalling	f. 10:-:-
2 saws for sawing ebony, at 12 guilders each, totalling	f. 24:-:-

1 saw with vice for sawing mother of pearl, 6 guilders,	f. 6:-:-
4 other saws, on average at 2 guilders each,	f. 8:-:-
2 lute 'boards' ( <i>borden</i> ) at 2 guilders each,	f. 4:-:-
1 anvil, 2 guilders,	f. 2:-:-
1 cutting knife, one thaler,	f. 1:10:-
70 chisels as well as gouges, gravers, pairs of compasses, pincers, scissors, at 6 stuivers each,	f. 21:-:-
40 files as well as scrapers with a steel blade, at 5 stuivers each,	f. 10:-:-
1 calipher, one thaler,	f. 1:10:-
1 branding iron, with 3 flowerpots cut in it,	f. 2:-:-
2 shooting boards, at 25 stuivers each, totalling	f. 2:10:-
3 copper glue pots, with a lamp, on average at 30 stuivers each, totalling	f. 6:10:-
30 clamps or pincers, at 6 stuivers each, totalling 9 guilders,	f. 9:-:-
1 metal 'morian' ( <i>stormhoet</i> ) with legs, etc.,	f. 4:-:-
100 templates for assorted instruments, both large and small, at 10 stuivers each,	f. 50:-:-
2000 strips, both black and white, for making spacers, at one stuiver each,	f. 100:-:-
30 cutting knives or scraping knives, at 4 stuivers each, totalling	f. 6:-:-
5 metal hammers with 2 wooden hammers, assorted, at 15 stuivers each,	f. 3:15 -
1 lathe with a lathe dog, chisel and gouges,	f. 30:-:-
1 press to make spacers,	f. 1:10:-
10 branding irons, both large and small, at 10 stuivers each, totalling	f. 5:-:-
12 lute moulds and mandora moulds, at 3 guilders each, totalling	f. 36:-:-
24 moulds for viola da gamba, at 15 stuivers each, totalling	f. 18:-:-
2 vices with ropes for making lutes, at 1 guilder each, totalling	f. 2:-:-
3 axes, at one guilder each,	f. 3:-:-
4 whetstones, at 5 stuivers each, totalling	f. 1:-:-
4 rulers, at 5 stuivers each, totalling	f. 1:-:-
100 small pincers, pegs and clamps,	f. 5:-:-
10 moulds for making cittern bodies and violin bodies, at one thaler each,	f. 13:10:-

*From Vlam, 'Leidse viool- en klavecimbelmakers', pp. 104-105.*

This unique list makes it clear that despite the fact that he was no longer referred to as a lute maker in the sources, Asseling was still making lutes (*loijten*) in 1649, as well as mandoras (small lutes), citterns and viols. He was also producing cases for citterns and viols or violins. The three joiners' benches suggest that the workshop was equipped for three people, so Asseling may have worked with two journeymen. An interesting entry is the twelve moulds used for building lutes and mandoras. Asseling was therefore able to make a wide range of instruments of different types and sizes. This broad basis is also seen in the 100 *patronen* [designs] for assorted instruments in his stock.

Thus in 1649 Andries Asseling was the only serious instrument maker in Leiden, and not many local makers are known in the second half of the 17th century either. Andries was succeeded by his son Hendrik Asseling (c.1625-1673), who inherited his father's tools. Although Hendrik did indeed continue to build musical instruments, he seems to have earned his living mainly as a freelance musician and dancing master, as well as by giving violin lessons. In 1654 he made a notarial statement regarding the misconduct of Margriet Schats, daughter of mistress Schats, to which he was witness as he gave music lessons there daily to mistress Schats' son. In his estate, there is reference to a great many outstanding payments due *conserneerende sijne kunst int speelen ende dansen* [with regard to his art of playing and dancing]. There is also a summary of his musical inventory.

*The inventory of the musical instruments and tools of Hendrik Asseling:*

Instruments of the deceased:

- 2 violins used by the deceased with bows
- 5 dancing master's fiddles with accessories
- another old violin, damaged, which is said to belong to someone else
- 1 metal vice with its mechanism, but without the planks
- 1 small batch of screws
- 1 small batch of assorted strings
- 1 batch of wood suitable for making violins or similar instruments
- 1 batch of music books
- 1 basket with old tools of various sorts and oddments

*From Vlam, 'Leidse viool- en klavecimbelmakers', p. 107.*

This shows that Hendrik did not play the lute, and apparently neither did he make lutes. But he did make violins, as the Haags Gemeentemuseum has a specimen which was built by him, dated 1662. On his death, however, little remained of his father's large, well-equipped workshop. It would appear that his activities as a violin maker had been neglected for some time.

Another Leiden instrument maker was Melchior Asseling, another son of Andries', who later also moved to The Hague. In 1652, there is mention of *Melchior Asselai luijtmacecker* who at the request of Hendrick Hasselmans, master surgeon of The Hague, testified that around one year beforehand, the latter had had a maid called Lijsbet, who had disappeared one day leaving behind a box of eight to ten clinker bricks wrapped in cloths and taking Hasselman's wife's best clothes with her. Later, however, the sources keep referring to Melchior as a violin maker or master violin maker. In 1662, an inventory was drawn up of the goods belonging to Melchior and his wife Helena Dispontijn, on account of the *oneenigh leeven* [discordant life] of the couple. The items in their house at Lang Achterom included *twee bas phiolen*, *twintich hantphiolen*, *een doosje*

*met snaren* [two bass violins, twenty hand violins, a box of strings]. Melchior died before 1664.

Melchior Asseling's move to The Hague was probably prompted by the better prospects there for instrument makers. We know a whole series of such craftsmen in the second half of the 17th century, including no fewer than three members of the Rosseter family, namely Jacob, Thomas and Philip. Jacob (James) Rosseter is referred to as a lute maker between 1643 and 1650. In 1680, he was still living in the same town, but then as a painter by profession. Thomas Rosseter is mentioned between 1639 and 1672, always as a violin maker. In the latter year, he lived in Spuistraat in the house called *De drie fiole* [The three violins]. We saw earlier that this Rosseter may have been identical to the lutenist from The Hague, Thomas Reset, who is mentioned in 1642.

We know much more about Philip Rosseter, who worked as a musician, lute maker, violin maker and guitar mender in The Hague from 1664 until his death in 1708. In 1660 he got married in Rotterdam to Jannetje van Alten, the widow of Philip Hacket, who was apparently also an Englishman. In 1664 the couple moved to The Hague, where they lived successively in Spuistraat, on the north side of the Singel, and in Lang Achterom. In The Hague, Rosseter was involved in the performances of the French opera. In 1682 he agreed with a certain François Cailliau that he was to supply costumes and other accessories for the opera at 20 stuivers each, to a total of 400 pounds, and also that after deduction of expenses (for the theatre, accommodation and travel), they would share the proceeds of all the performances, while the costumes would remain the property of Cailliau after the last performance. Rosseter's daughter Johanna was married in 1680 to Thomas de la Sablonière from Paris, the director of the *Opéra français* in The Hague. As an instrument maker, Rosseter appears to have built mainly bowed instruments. The only time he called himself a lute maker is in a deed from 1665, and elsewhere he is always referred to as a violin maker or master violin maker. But he was able to repair guitars, as we saw earlier that in 1681 he demanded a sum of more than f. 219 from guitar maker Jean de la Grange for the repair of *ghitterren* [guitars], refreshments, borrowed money and other things. On this occasion, strangely enough, Rosseter is referred to as a 'musician'.

In The Hague between 1653 and 1673 we also find a master Willem Tobias, who is referred to alternately as a violin maker and a lute maker. At the moment, we know little more about him than a few addresses. He lived successively on Kapelsbrug, in Nieuwe Herderinnestraat and on Spui. He may have been the father of the string maker Tobias Willemszoon, who is mentioned in 1672.

There would have been musical instrument makers working in The Hague earlier as well. Up to now, the only one found is Hendrik Hendrikszoon Peerboom, who bought a house on Noordeinde in 1587, which was later called 'the house of Pereboom'. In view of this location, he must have lived in comfort. The adjacent property was bought by Prince Frederik Hendrik of Nassau in 1616. In 1592, Peerboom was the widower of Meijnsge Maertensdochter, and he remarried later to Catharina Claesdochter. He died before 1616, after which his widow appears to have continued the business. The inventory drawn up on her death (after 1635) contains *noch een cyter, een viool, een guytaerne by hem gemaect wesende; ende noch een deel violen ende ander, begost maer niet volmaect* [another cittern, a violin and a guitar made by him; and some other violins and other instruments, which he had begun but not finished]. So Hendrik seems to have built bowed and plucked instruments. This early mention of a guitar is striking.

We see a lot of Philip Rosseter in the notarial deeds, as his actions caused quite a stir. Around 1670, for instance, he was involved in a lengthy conflict with his Frisian in-laws about an inheritance, whereby he felt compelled to record statements about slander from the opposite party and the bad character of some family members. In this respect he had it attested in 1675 that Catharina van Alten, residing in Sneek, had slandered him by stating publicly that he was living with his wife out of wedlock and that their children were conceived through fornication and incest, which was all untrue. But in the same year he retaliated with the statement by Jacobina Meurlinx, wife of Anthonij Oldenburger, who at his request attested that around 24 years ago Maria van Alten had suffered from the Spanish pox (a venereal disease), for which she was treated by her father, master Jan de Tanttrecter, and that before and after that time had behaved like a 'shameful whore', for which reason she was put in the stocks in the madhouse.

In 1675 Rosseter was at loggerheads with some English soldiers, who had threatened him in his home and hit him on the head with a sword hilt. Then two Irishmen came in, who put a sword to the chest of his son Hendrik and threatened to run him through, while adding to Rosseter '*Wij sullen u den hals breecken*' [We'll break your neck]. The reason for this was probably an exchange of words and a tussle a few days earlier between Hendrik and an English major called Jems, whereby the latter fell over and, according to Rosseter, was wounded by his own sword. In 1681 Philip Rosetter was ordered to pay his debt to the widow of the late Paulus Terhaer, master surgeon, for the unpaid treatment of a large wound to the head of Rosseter's child. And then we hear in 1682 of a lawsuit concerning rent overdue to his landlady, mistress Josina Sinapius, and in 1699 of a neighbours' argument about the use of the terrace of Rosseter's house. Rosseter's short fuse is illustrated by an incident in 1692, in which Pieter Hanaut, master saddler, did not want to pay him because of debts owed by Hendrik Rosseter. On this occasion, Philip swore and cursed, calling him a scoundrel and a thief, and threatened that the next time he ran into him on the street he would *als een hondt onder de voet wilde stooten en het hert in de hant soude geven* [trample him underfoot like a dog and rip his heart out].

Little is known about makers of plucked instruments in other towns. An active builder in Utrecht was Michiel Vredeman, who was born in Mechelen in 1564, the son of the aforementioned Sebastian Vredeman de Vries. In 1583, Michiel acquired burghership of Utrecht, where he was an *instrumentmaker van so fiolen als cithers* [an instrument maker of both violins and citterns]. In 1592 he married Tanneken Pietersdochter from Antwerp and lived on Nieuwe Gracht. Michiel Vredeman is also known as the publisher of a volume of cittern music. He died in 1629.

We also know some names of builders in Dordrecht. Cittern makers mentioned there are David Aertszoon (1619), Abraham Vincenten (1631 and 1632) and Hans Maertenszoon (1643 and 1663; in the latter year he is aged 65). We know a few more details about David Davidszoon. He, too, is referred to as a cittern maker, but in a deed from 1614 (in which he is a witness, along





'The instrument maker', from: Jan and Caspar Luyken, *Spiegel van het menselyk bedryf* (Amsterdam 1694)

with master Henrick, an organist), he calls himself a lute maker. He was a son of master David Aertszoon, and in 1619 his mother owed him f. 450, as she was supported by him. He was married to Mayken Denisius. In 1625 he drew up his will on his sickbed.

Instrument-building in Amsterdam presents a different picture to that in Leiden and The Hague. In the Netherlands' largest city, a remarkable number of instrument makers appear to have been active in the first half of the 17th century. Initially they were mainly referred to as cittern makers, so they would certainly have made plucked instruments. Johan Giskes has dug up many of these craftsmen from the sources, coming to the conclusion that at least six makers of stringed instru-

ments were working in Amsterdam in the year 1600, amid a population of around 50,000. In 1622 there were at least ten for a population of over 100,000, and eight years later, in 1630, there were seven to eight for a slightly larger population. As the Amsterdam makers of stringed instruments have been researched relatively well, we can get a fairly representative picture of them. It is therefore worthwhile giving a complete overview.

The Amsterdam makers of stringed instruments, in chronological order from the first time they are mentioned in the records. The information has been taken from Giskes, *200 jaar bouw van strijkinstrumenten*, Giskes, *400 jaar vioolbouwkunst*, Giskes, *Cornelis Kleynman*, and the Bredius fiches in the Nederlands Muziekinstituut.

John Rose (Jan Roos). English instrument maker, working in Amsterdam in the 1580s. Nothing is known in the literature about John Rose senior and junior, well-known builders recorded in Bridewell near London between 1552 and 1611. There is no evidence of him ever having left this place. The Gemeentemuseum Den Haag has two tenor gambas by John Rose.

Laurens Sander. Born in Cologne c.1567. In 1587 recorded as a lute maker's journeyman, and in 1594 as a cittern maker. See the main text.

Nicolaes Aertszoon Coop (Cop). Brother of Gerrit Coop, son-in-law of Artus Burlon. Recorded as an instrument and cittern maker in Amsterdam in 1592-1603 and in 1612, and as an innkeeper there in 1608-1613; buried in the Oude Kerk in 1621. Lived in Nieuwebrugsteeg.

Artus Burlon. Born in Antwerp c.1537/40, died c.1620. Came to Amsterdam after 1585, recorded there as a lute and cittern maker in 1593-1619. Father of Hans Burlon, father-in-law of Nicolaes Aertszoon Coop and Gerard Coop, brothers. See the main text.

Hans Aertsen Burlon. Born in Antwerp the son of the instrument maker Artus Burlon. Recorded as an instrument maker of *snarenspeel* [stringed instruments] and cittern maker in Amsterdam in 1593-1627. Married in Dordrecht in 1593 to Paschijnken, David Aertszoon's daughter from Antwerp; remarried to Anne Jans before 1624. Lived in Doelenstraat.

Thomas Aertszoon Bu(e)rlon. Recorded as a cittern maker in 1595 and in 1605, when he and his wife Aeltje Gosendochter had a child, Aert, baptised in the Oude Kerk. Referred to in 1625 as *musicijn* [musician].

Hermen Coop. Born in Kalkar c.1574, the son of Hendrik Coop. Recorded in 1597 as a cittern maker in Amsterdam; living on Oudezijds Voorburgwal at the time.

Gerrit Aertszoon Coop (Cop). Born in Xanten c.1562; brother of Nicolaes Coop. Married in 1598 to Catelijne (Lijntje, Catharina) Burlon from Antwerp, daughter of Artus Burlon. Recorded as an instrument maker of *snarenspeel* [string playing] and cittern maker in Amsterdam in 1597-1627. Lived on Oudezijds Voorburgwal. Died after 1625 and before 1630, when his widow remarried to Jan Pynas.

Hendrik Coop. Recorded as a cittern maker in 1598. Father of Hermen Coop.

Rochus Dierickszoon. Cittern maker on Nes. Took out a marriage licence on 16 August 1597; living on Veste near (Oude) Hoogstraat at the time.

Helmech Jansen. Born in Amsterdam. Recorded as an instrument and cittern maker in 1590-1600. Died before March 1607.

Pieter Franszoon Bosch (Bochs). Born in Dordrecht c.1578, married in 1604 in Amsterdam to Niesgen Pieters. From then, recorded as an instrument and cittern maker. Died in or after 1640. Established on Oudezijds Voorburgwal and other addresses round the Oude Kerk. Entered the employment of the Dutch West India Company in 1640; in that year he also borrowed f. 1000. We know of a viola da gamba made by him in 1625. In 1620, he demanded payment for a *basconter* [contrabass] that he had sent to Cornelis Reijerszoon and which was returned to him *in 't geheel gebroocken* [completely broken]. There may be some confusion with his namesake Pieter Franszoon, son of Francis Lupo.

Abraham Joosten van Offenbeek. Born in Antwerp c.1580. Recorded as an instrument maker in Amsterdam in 1605, and later as a cittern maker. Died after 1628. See the main text.

Philips Janszoon. Recorded as a cittern maker in 1606.

Pieter Pieterszoon. Born in Utrecht c.1584. Recorded as an instrument and cittern maker in Amsterdam in 1606-1666. Lived in (Oude) Hoogstraat (1606), bought a property in 1621 in Jan Coxsteegje outside the Gasthuismolensteegpoort; lived on Bloemgracht in 1666, from where he was buried. Half-brother of Jan Boudewijnszoon, cittern maker.

Francis (François) Franszoon Lupo. Born in London c.1582. Evidence of his presence in Amsterdam from 1607. Cittern, instrument and violin maker of Italian origin. Lived in Wagenstraat. His son Pieter Franszoon also became a cittern maker. His stepson from a second marriage was the violin maker Cornelis Wesselse Kleynman.

Abraham Thomaszoon (Thomis). Born in Zevenbergen c.1588. On taking out his marriage licence in 1609, recorded as a cittern maker, living in Spinhuissteeg.

Philiberto Pellicere. Judging by his name, of foreign origin. Recorded as a lute maker in 1612 and 1615. See the main text.

Dirk Gerritszoon. Recorded as a cittern maker in 1612-1625. Born c.1586. Lived in Schoutensteeg (1612). In 1625 decided to go with his family as a soldier to the East Indies.

Jan Boudewijnszoon. c.1590-1660. Son of Boudewijn Lowijs; half-brother of the cittern maker Pieter Pieterszoon. Recorded as an instrument and cittern maker in 1613-1660. In 1626 he concluded a contract with his half-brother Willem Pietersen, beer porter, in which his son Pieter Willemszoon was to be apprenticed to him as a cittern maker for ten years, for his board, lodging and clothing, etc. Married successively to Tryn Melis (1622), Deliaentje Alberts (1628) and Annetie Voscuyt (1652). Lived on Lijnbaansgracht (1613), on the Keulse Kaai (1614), in Oudezijds Kapelsteeg (now St Olofssteeg) (1623, 1648, 1660), and in 1652 at the sign of De vergulde Fiol [The gilded violin].

- Jan Jansen. Born in 'Waernen' (Warmen, Ruhr) c.1593. Recorded as a cittern maker in 1618, on taking out a marriage licence in Amsterdam, and on his funeral in 1625. Lived in Oudezijds Armsteeg.
- Jacob Lambertszoon. Recorded as a cittern maker in 1620.
- Gerrit Benningh. Cittern maker. Born in Amsterdam c.1606. Took out a marriage licence in 1630, when living on Uylenburg. Recorded again in 1635.
- Pieter Franszoon. Cittern maker. Born in 1608 as the son of the cittern maker Francis Lupo; died in or after 1635. Married to Anna Thyssen. Lived in Wijdesteeg in a house called *De roode haes* [The red hare], which was sold at foreclosure auction in 1634. See also his namesake Pieter Franszoon Bosch; information about the two probably overlaps.
- Pieter Willemszoon. Apprenticed to his uncle Jan Boudewijnszoon in 1626, aged twelve or thereabouts. Recorded as a cittern maker in 1637, 1640 and 1642, and as a turf carrier in 1667. Lived on Herengracht (1637), in Muiden (before 1640), in Tuinstraat (1642), and in Trefsteeeg (1667). Died after 8 January 1668.
- Gerrit Janszoon Menslage (Mensla). Born c.1606 in Essen, and worked from 1638 or earlier in Amsterdam as a cittern maker, and in 1661 as a violin maker, in which year he died. See the main text.
- Cornelis Wessels. Born in Amsterdam c.1626. In 1648 he was a cittern maker living in Wagenstraat, when he took out a licence to be married to Annetje Davids. In deeds from 1655 and 1667 he is referred to as a violin maker.
- Jan Boumeester. Born c.1629 in Quakenbrück (approx. 80 km to the east of Coevorden). Married Annetje Wouters van Munster from Ruinerwold in Amsterdam in 1653. From then up to his death in 1681 sometimes referred to as a cittern maker (1674, 1677 and 1681), but more often as a violin maker (1653, 1655, 1660, 1664, 1672 and 1681).

The list shows at a glance that mainly in the first half of the 17th century, there were a great many instrument makers working in Amsterdam. On this basis, we can make a few assumptions. To start with it is striking that most of these craftsmen are referred to as cittern makers, sometimes alternating with 'instrument maker' (with the occasional addition 'of stringed instruments'). The term 'lute maker' is seldom found, and then mainly in the years around 1600, but not afterwards. Yet we know from a few cases that cittern or instrument makers really did build lutes. It would appear that in Amsterdam, at any rate, the term 'cittern maker' served as a general term to indicate a builder of stringed instruments. The term disappears from the middle of the century, and alongside 'instrument maker' we then usually find the term 'violin maker'.

Originally, nearly all the cittern makers came from far outside Amsterdam, often from areas just over the borders of the Dutch Republic, namely from Antwerp and small towns in Germany. As far as we can see, it was only from around 1630 that people born in Amsterdam also started working in the profession. Certainly at the beginning, the instrument makers lived near to one another in the neighbourhood of the Oude Kerk, although later we find them more dis-

persed over the city. They were often related to one another. The profession was regularly handed down from father to son, and the daughters married colleagues in the profession.

We will single out a few instrument makers about whom we are a little better informed, as well as the craftsmen who are explicitly recorded as lute makers. The oldest family of builders of stringed instruments in Amsterdam, at least on the basis of this list, was the family of Artus Burlon. He moved with his wife and children from Antwerp to Amsterdam, and on 28 November 1589, ten years after being recorded as a free master in the Guild of Saint Lucas in Antwerp, he became a burgher of Amsterdam. In the documents, he is referred to as both a cittern maker and a lute maker. In 1613, Artus obtained a patent from the States of Holland and West Friesland to be the sole user in Holland of a varnish he had developed himself, which was suitable for varnishing wooden dinner plates. In 1619, ill and weak, he drew up his last will and testament. Both his own sons and his sons-in-law (two brothers born in Xanten) worked in Amsterdam as cittern makers. One of them, Nicolaes Aertszoon Coop, became an innkeeper after being a music instrument maker. His inn *De drye Coningshoofden* [The three Kings' Heads] in Heintje Hoekssteeg (the current premises at number 23), which he owned from 1604, was the centre of many activities. Numerous prominent artists of the day gathered there, and maybe even the whole Guild of Saint Lucas in Amsterdam.

There must have been a lute maker working in Amsterdam as early as 1587, as in that year Laurens Sander is described as a lute maker's journeyman. Sander was born in Cologne around 1567. In 1587 he took out a marriage licence in Amsterdam to Henrickgen Vechters from 'the Dam'. In 1594 he acquired burghership, on which occasion he called himself a cittern maker and had apparently established himself as an independent craftsman. Sander lived in Hoogstraat.

One instrument maker who is referred to as a lute maker both times he is mentioned in the sources is Philiberto Pellicere. Judging by his name, he was of foreign (Italian?) origin. When he is recorded, however, it is on interesting occasions. In 1612, he bought no fewer than nineteen paintings at auction, for the considerable sum of f. 29:14 in total. The works included biblical scenes, one *Marienbeelt* [Virgin Mary] – he was apparently Catholic – and a number of *tronies* [portraits], as well as *1 kat en hont* [1 cat and dog], *1 bloempot* [1 flowerpot] and a painting called *wit en root* [white and red]. In 1615, he passed on to the poor of Wijk bij Duurstede the claims he had on a schoolmaster there, master Jan van Ouwen, to the sums of f. 9 for the purchase of a lute and f. 3:6 for *speldewerk* [lacework] and certain Italian books.

The case of Abraham Joosten van Offenbeek is probably quite typical of Amsterdam instrument makers in this period. He was born in Antwerp around 1580. In Amsterdam he is recorded in 1605 as an instrument maker and in 1637 as a cittern maker. He was already dead in the latter year; the last record of his life is in 1628. He lived on Oudezijds Voorburgwal. The documents never refer to him as a lute maker, although he certainly built lutes, which were apparently high-quality instruments. In a *rijfelarijboekje* [a booklet recording the stakes and prizes of an illegal lottery], which can be dated 1625–1630, the ninth prize is a lute built by him of *elff partijen* [eleven courses, or eleven ribs, perhaps?], *goed van resonantie en 7 pond Vlaams waard* [of good resonance and to the value of 7 Flemish pounds]. Van Offenbeek took part in the lottery himself, with four lots.



Lute-building by people not referred to as lute makers in the sources also occurred later in the century, as we know by chance from an inventory of the estate of the instrument maker Gerrit Janszoon Menslage, or rather of his widow. Menslage was born around 1606 in Essen, Germany, and worked from 1638 or earlier in Amsterdam as a cittern maker, while he calls himself violin maker in 1661, the year of his death. He was married to Grietje Boumeesters from Quakenbrück, a niece of the well-known instrument maker Jan Boumeester. The couple had four children. Their initial address was in Oudezijds Armsteeg, and on Gerrit's death they lived in Warmoesstraat. Following Gerrit's death, Grietje apparently continued the business, together with the assistant Aerent Roelofszoon from Münster. In 1669 they sold a guitar together, for the considerable sum of f. 20 (we have referred to this case earlier). On 29 July 1670 Grietje drew up her last will and testament and died the same day.

Shortly afterwards, on 5 and 6 August, the notary drew up an inventory of Grietje's house and workshop, which was then (once again?) in Oudezijds Armsteeg (see p. 162). It is clear that violin-building formed the main part of the business, as the inventory lists 89 violins in varying stages of construction, both old and new, in poor and repaired condition, with or without strings or varnish, plus a four-stringed bass violin, three tenor violins, a *bordviool* [possibly a kind of bowed zither], twelve pochettes (dancing master's fiddles), two old viols, fifteen descant viols, five tenor viols, three bass viols, and hundreds of individual parts for stringed instruments. Also listed are a small and a large harp, three *Noordse balken* (a zither-like stringed instrument also known as hommel, épinette des Vosges or Scheitholt), an English harpsichord on a wooden trestle stand, a small harpsichord and a large number of wind instruments: an ebony German recorder, four boxwood recorders, ten other recorders, four boxwood flutes, fourteen poor recorders and flutes, ten poor German *musijck fluyten* [music flutes], fourteen normal shawms and one large shawm. There are also large numbers of parts for instruments and assorted strings, such as brass strings for *Noordse balken*, Roman strings for bass viols, English bass strings, *hoedemakerssnaren* [hatters' strings] and violin strings. It is likely that at least some of the 'old' instruments listed were not built in the workshop and that Menslage dealt in second-hand instruments that he purchased, repaired if necessary and then sold on.

The list also contains quite a few plucked instruments, plus parts and strings for them. This shows that although the lute may not have been the focus of production, the business still had 25 of them in stock, including a special instrument made of blue wood. Twelve of them are described as 'old', both large and small. These, too, may have been second-hand instruments. The same may have applied to the other lutes listed – ten theorboed ('with double necks') and three eleven-course lutes – but it is clear that lutes were also built in the workshop at one time. It is doubtful, though, whether lutes were still being produced in 1670, in view of descriptions like *een oude kist met luijth- ende cijtherformen* [an old chest with lute and cittern moulds] and *eenige oude rommelingh, soo van luijthen als luijthkassen, van geringe importantie* [assorted old oddments, of both lutes and lute cases, of little significance]. There were also nineteen old lute cases in stock and a remarkably large supply of lute strings. More or less the same applies to citterns. They were, however, still made at the time, although not in great numbers, as there is mention of three new



citterns; two with strings and one without. Again there are also old instruments: fourteen, both large and small, and two special instruments (one inlaid with mother-of-pearl and one in black and white wood), which once again would not have been new.

This detailed inventory also gives a glimpse of the less prevalent stringed instruments, for which there was apparently still a market. The list contains an angelica (the clerk had a bit of trouble spelling the name of this seemingly unfamiliar exotic instrument), complete with strings and case, a mandora, two lute-citterns, four bandoras and five *katarns* (guitars?). What is remarkable is the absence of any theorbos. And finally, the outstanding debts of the business, whether owed by it or due to it, are instructive. The late Grietje was due sums from musicians (who may have bought instruments or strings from her) and from violin makers, while she owed money to others for wood, strings, turned pegs and violins she had bought. Here is further evidence that the Menslage/Bouwmeesters workshop also dealt in strings and second-hand instruments.

*Plucked instruments and requisites in the estate of Grietje Boumeesters.*

*In the upstairs room:*

[...] Three new citterns: two with strings and one without – Ten old citterns, both large and small [...]

*In the attic:*

One *anghchlijck* (corrected from *ansijilick*) [angelica], strung, with a case – An old cittern with a case – Nineteen old lute cases – Assorted old oddments, of both lutes and lute cases, of little significance [...]

*In the loft:*

An old chest with lute and cittern moulds.

*In the front room:*

[...] Seven old lutes, including one of blue wood – One mandora – Two lute-citterns.

*In the hall:*

Ten lutes with double necks – Three lutes with eleven courses – A further five old lutes, both large and small – Five *katarns* [...] Four bandoras [...] One [corrected from 'three'] cittern inlaid with mother-of-pearl – One cittern in black and white wood [...] A further two old citterns [...] A whole pack of lute strings – Two hundred and one single bundles of lute strings [...] Six bundles of both lute and violin strings – Sixty rolls of steel cittern strings varying in number – A further four dozen of the same – Twenty-eight rolls of brass cittern strings varying in number – A further two dozen of the same – A box of nineteen rolls of steel cittern strings varying in number – Forty-seven rolls of brass cittern strings of assorted number [...]

*In the front cellar:*

Seventeen ribs. [...]

*In the corridor at the back:*

Thirty-four ribs. [...]

*Outstanding debts due to this estate:*

[...] Hendrick Jacobszoon, violin maker on Sint Anthonisbreestraet: f. 19:10:- – Philips, violin maker on Singel above Appelmarkt: f. 2:17:- [...] Pieter Piccart, musician in this city: f. 3:14:- – Jeronimus Rijnwalt, musician in this city: f. 10:8:- [...] Monsieur Koenraed, musician: f. -:12:- [...]

*Outstanding debts owed by this estate:*

To Denijs Ballij for strings bought, the estate owes the sum of f. 12:10:- [...] To Josephus Butler, for wood: f. 4:-:- – To Hendrick Wijbus, turner, for turned pegs: f. 16:-:- [...] To Reijnier Lampe for strings: f. 2:12:8 – To Jan Boumeester, for wood and violins, et cetera: f. 71:13:- [...]

*From the edition of the document by Giskes, '400 jaar vioolbouwkunst', pp. 82-89, as well as the description by the same, 'De vioolmakersfamilies Boumeester en Menslage', pp. 58-60.*

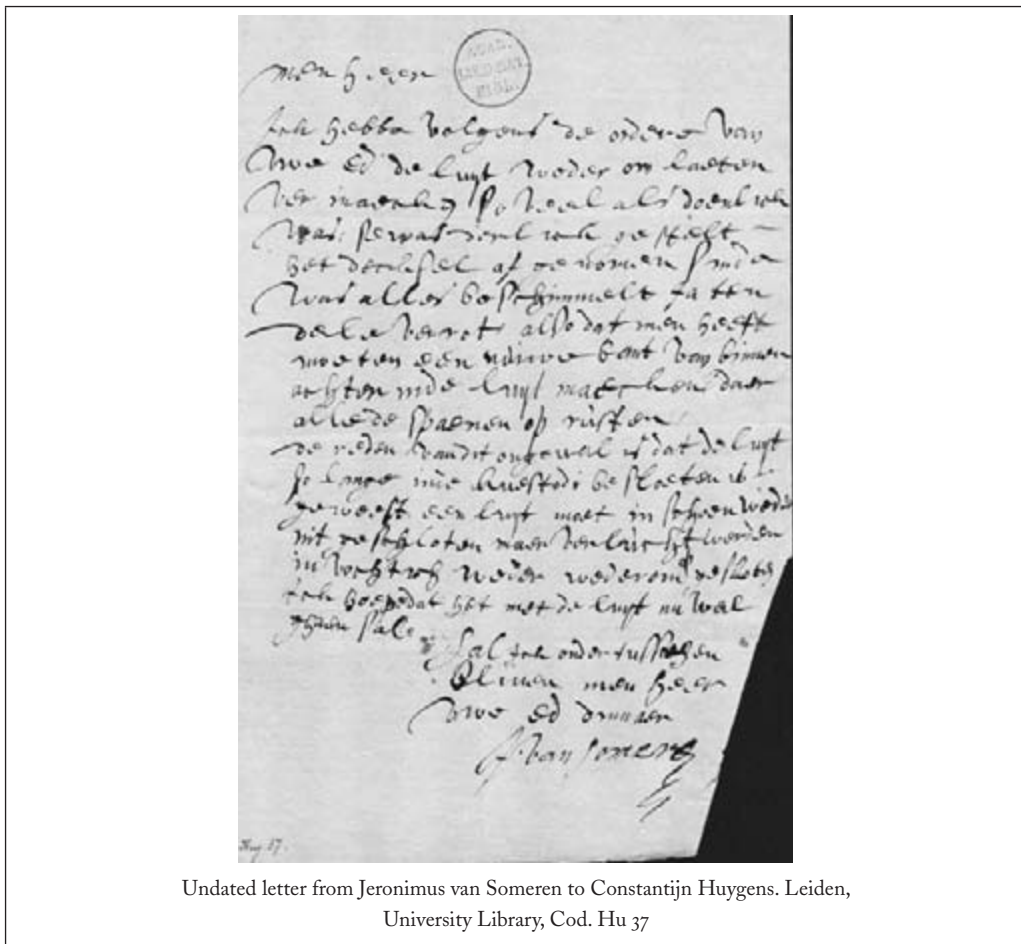
We can conclude by saying that builders of stringed instruments are usually referred to with the general term 'instrument maker', and in Amsterdam in the first half of the 17th century with the term 'cittern maker'. It is clear that most of them were not specialised in making one particular sort of instrument. They appear to have produced and repaired both plucked and bowed instruments, and people could go to them for lutes, citterns, violins and viols. They also dealt in second-hand instruments and strings (both gut and metal).

We do not get the impression that instrument makers lived in poverty. They often owned their own house, and of course they needed a well-equipped workshop, which would have been costly. One example is the workshop of Andries Asseling, who probably had two assistants, although his monopoly in Leiden for many years suggests he was at the top of his profession. From the inventories of his workshop and those of others it is also clear that 'manufacturing' processes were used, with large numbers of instruments being produced in a conveyor-belt system, as it were. Following the death of a craftsman, his widow could continue the business with the help of one or more assistants, whereby she would take responsibility mainly for the business side and leave the lion's share of the work to her assistant.

As far as we know at the moment, The Hague and particularly Amsterdam were centres of instrument-building. Far fewer builders are found in Leiden. In Amsterdam, in particular, there must have been great competition between the many instrument makers, and these circumstances may have had the effect of improving quality and lowering prices. In any case, the situation forced some people out of the profession. We find builders with jobs on the side, such as innkeepers, and we saw earlier that the combination of musician and instrument maker was not uncommon. There are also cases of builders who eventually chose another profession, switching to jobs like turf carrier, soldier and painter. The less fortunate builders could work for a colleague. In order to keep their heads above water, people also sought protection through family connections. Builders' sons followed in their fathers' footsteps and their daughters married colleagues in

the profession. Instrument makers often lived in the same neighbourhood: in Amsterdam around the Oude Kerk, and in Leiden near Rapenburg. These well-to-do neighbourhoods would also have been where the majority of their customers lived.

What did these lute makers do to earn their living? Whatever the case, there would have been work in repairing and adapting existing instruments. Even the experts did not always handle their fragile lutes with the appropriate care. We know of a letter (unfortunately undated) from the lutenist Jeronimus van Someren, a former teacher of Constantijn Huygens and later also of his children. He is returning a lute to Huygens that is in a sorry state, which he had had repaired by a craftsman whom he does not name. Incidentally, the laborious handwriting of the letter suggests that Van Someren was not a regular writer.



Undated letter from Jeronimus van Someren to Constantijn Huygens. Leiden, University Library, Cod. Hu 37

Men heer,

Ick hebbe volgens de ordere van Uwe Ed. de luyt wederom laeten vermaecken, so veel als doenlick was. Se was derlick gestelt: het deksel afgenomen sinde, was alles beschimmelt, ja ten dele verrot, also dat men heeft moeten een nuiwe bant van binnen achter inde luyt maecken, daer alle de spaenen op rusten. De reden van dit ongeval is dat de luyt so lange in de kuestodi besloeten is geweest. Een luyt moet in schoen weder nit geschloten, maer verlicht werden. In vochtich weder wederom opgesloten. Ick hoepe dat het met de luyt nu wel ghaen sal.

Sal ick ondertusschen bliven, men heer, uwe Ed. dinnaers, J. van Someren.

*My dear Sir,*

*On order of Your Honour, I have had the lute repaired again, as far as possible. It was in a sorry state. When the soundboard was removed, everything [inside] was mouldy and even rotten in places, so that a new band had to be fixed inside the lute, on which the ribs rest. The reason for this wretched condition is that the lute has been kept in its case for so long. In fine weather, the lute must not be put away, but aired, and then put away again in damp weather. I hope that the lute now functions properly again.*

*Meanwhile I remain, Sir, Your Honour's servant, J. van Someren.*

Huygens' correspondence repeatedly refers to lutes that need adapting. It was mainly a case of relatively large instruments being theorboed; that is, expanded with extra bass strings on an extended neck. We saw how in 1650 Johan van Reede, known in another context as the author of several lute manuscripts, sought Huygens' advice on this matter. First he had a lute delivered to Huygens that could possibly be theorboed, and then a theorboed instrument on the same day, asking whether the resonance of the latter was better than that of the first lute. In 1643, the Haarlem priest and music theoretician Joan Albert Ban also sent his lute to Huygens to have it theorboed. It was accompanied by the message that he would like to have the instrument back if it was not suitable or good enough for the operation. He would, of course, reimburse the costs of the builder who carried it out.

Dutch lute makers were probably not able to live solely on maintaining, repairing and adapting existing instruments. They would also have made new lutes, but the sources only make incidental mention of an instrument delivered to a buyer, such as the aforementioned guitar from 1669, although even in this case there is no explicit mention of it being a newly built instrument. Yet, going by the large number of instrument makers and, for example, the frequent depiction of lutes in paintings, there must have been a considerable number of instruments in circulation (Plate 17). And we should also remember that players, at least the more fortunate among them, often possessed a whole series of instruments. As in Huygens' case, it was normal to play more than just one instrument, and people also collected certain instruments in families, particularly violins

and viols, from small to large, so that they always had instruments to hand for making music with other people. This applied to amateur players as well as to professional musicians. In 1670, Johannes van Horne, a Leiden professor of anatomy, left a harpsichord, three citterns and five assorted stringed instruments in his estate. There is a more detailed description of the instruments in the estate of another – slightly less highly placed – man from Leiden; Cornelis van Zijp, a bacon salesman who died in 1694. It describes *een clavecimbael, vierkant, van Ruijckers, met drie voeten; een orgel; vier fiolen; een fiool de gamba off basfiool; een sackfiooltje; een kloekspel; een hackbort; een koper trompet* [a square harpsichord by Ruckers on three legs; an organ; four violins; a viola da gamba or bass viol; a dancing master's fiddle; a glockenspiel; a dulcimer; a brass trumpet]. Of note here is the presence of an expensive instrument by Ruckers, the renowned Antwerp family of harpsichord makers. Others were more modest. The inventory of the estate of Floris Zoop, from Amsterdam, which was drawn up in 1657, lists *opt musickcamertje* [in the music room] a portrait of the deceased, a lute in a case and three viols. Zoop was apparently an amateur lutenist and viol player. The same would have applied to Jan Basse, also from Amsterdam, who died in 1637 and from whose estate a lute was sold for the relatively small sum of f. 1:16.

Local lute makers would probably have worked not so much for the most demanding and wealthy players like Huygens, but rather for the lower segment of the market. Nevertheless, the first lutes of the young Constantijn would have been of local origin. And the lute-playing university students would probably have belonged to the clientele of the local lute makers. In 1616, for instance, Joachim van den Hove and a certain Lucas Fagius, student of medicine, made a notarial attestation that they had repeatedly heard another student, Steven Wijbouts, saying he had bought a lute from the Leiden lute maker Andries Asseling for 12 guilders. It is not clear whether Asseling had built the lute for Wijbouts or whether he had sold him a second-hand instrument.

There is, however, one instance of a letter to Huygens from a builder offering to make him a new instrument. This was an unnamed builder from Liège, and it is doubtful that Huygens took up the offer, as we hear nothing more about it. In 1669 Huygens gave a letter of recommendation to the instrument maker Doué to take along to Joan Fanshawe. He advised the latter to order lutes and theorbos from Doué, as Dufaut is also enthusiastic about his instruments. This shows that the famous French lutenist played on newly built lutes, so other professional players would have done the same. These instruments were probably more reasonably priced than old Bolognese lutes.

### *Strings*

The purchase of lute strings was not without its problems, either. These strings were made of gut, like those for the guitar and for stringed instruments such as the viola da gamba and violin. The literature often refers to guts, sheep guts, when talking about lute strings. See, for example, Huygens' *Luythandel* (the complete poem is on pp. 85–86):

Als handen die maer dunne darmen	<i>Like hands that touch the slender strings</i>
Met Vingeren, en niet met armen,	<i>With fingers, not with the whole arm</i>
Te roeren hebben, en 't geluid	<i>In order to coax a sound,</i>
Te locken uijt een' stomme Luijt.	<i>From a dumb lute.</i>

The quality of this natural product was quite variable, depending on the sheep that provided the material and the craftsman that processed it. Lute handbooks therefore give instructions with remarkable frequency on how to distinguish a good string from a bad one. One should stretch part of the string between both hands, pluck it with a finger and take a good look at the vibration. If the string oscillates evenly, it is an indication of a pure sound (see the illustration, p. 169). Wealthier customers preferred to order their strings from abroad. Strings from Lyon, and particularly those from Rome, had a good reputation. Huygens, of course, was only satisfied with the very best, and his correspondence once again enlightens us as to the trouble he had to take to obtain the best quality. In 1669, he thanked his agent Sébastien Chièze in Orange for the five packs of lute strings from Rome, which miraculously arrived (one pack got lost in the post). He immediately ordered some thick strings from Lyon; red bass strings for lute and theorbo, which were better than the Italian ones. In 1670, he asked Maurits de Wilhem in Rome to buy strings for him there through an expert middleman: half a dozen packs of good lute strings, half white and half blue or *pavonazze* [peacock blue]. He estimated the cost at around 40 or 50 Dutch stuivers per pack.

Seventeenth-century paintings are sometimes so detailed that they even tell us something about the strings on the instruments. The double portrait by Frans van Mieris of the Leiden professor François de Boë Sylvius and his wife (Plate 18) clearly shows that some strings of the lute played by his wife are of a blue colour; these are probably the *pavonazze* mentioned in the letter by Huygens. The bass strings in the picture are red in colour. This would appear to confirm the theory held by some specialists today that these bass strings were treated chemically in some way to make them heavier, with the beneficial result that quite thin strings could be used to produce the lowest tones. Strings that are too thick, with a relatively low tension, do not sound good on a lute. And the surviving old lutes do indeed have remarkably small holes in their bridges, also for the bass strings. The problem, however, is that in his treatise on lute tuning (1610), John Dowland clearly writes that in choosing bass strings, people should take care to ensure that these red strings are translucent, whereas modern experiments have only produced opaque brownish strings to date. The English lute maker David Van Edwards suspects that in the 17th-century process people used vermilion with a base of mercury sulphide, which does indeed have the properties of being heavy and bright red, and which was used for all sorts of applications at the time. Strings produced in such a way would be strictly prohibited nowadays, as besides being highly toxic, all mercury compounds can be easily absorbed into the body through the skin. It is to be feared that if people in the 17th century did indeed use such strings, then lutenists would have gradually poisoned themselves through playing.



A letter received in 1650 by Joan Thijs, the owner of the Thysius Lute Book discussed earlier, from his friend Job Ludolf provides information about the strings from Rome, their quality and the way people handled them. Ludolf sent Thysius a roll of strings, writing:

Je vous envoye un eschantillon de cordes en eschevaux comme je les ay achetez moy mesme a Rome, je vous en avois destiné plusieurs, si avois eu le bonheur de passer par la Hollande. Mais a cet heur je crains qu'elles soient devenu desja vieilles, ou qu'elles se gastoit entre cy et Hollande. Vous y pourrez pourtant voir la vraye longoeur de cordes de Rome, et de quelle façon elle se conservent le mieux, car on m'a dit qu'elles perdoient beaucoup du bon son estant pliées en long. Vous verrez si les chanterelles sont bonnes estants montées sur vostre luth. J'avois dessein si j'estois passé par la Hollande de le monter tout de neuf en recoignoissance de ce que j'y ay joué, a fin que vous l'eussiez peu tousjours present a quelque amy qui en joue.

*I send you a sample of a roll of strings just as I purchased it in Rome; I had ordered several for you in case I should have had the good fortune to pass through Holland. But I am afraid they have become old or that they will have become spoilt between here and Holland. In any case, you can see the real length of Roman strings and how best to keep them, as I have been told that they lose much of their sound quality if they are folded lengthwise. You will see whether the chanterelles [highest strings] are good if you put them on your lute. If I had passed through Holland, I was planning to completely restring your lute out of gratitude for being allowed to play it, so that you would always have it ready for any lute-playing friends.*

For the less wealthy lute player, there would also have been strings of a cheaper quality, which could be bought closer to home. This may have been the case for the strings delivered to Huygens at the beginning of 1650 by Thomas Willeboirts of Antwerp, who was also a well-known painter. Willeboirts was glad that Huygens was pleased with the delivery, as it was easy to supply poor-quality strings. He remarked that it was 'like nuts or chestnuts – you can't look inside them'. In 1610 the young Huygens had already managed to wheedle strings out of his cousin Marcus de Vogelaer from Amsterdam, despite the fact that Marcus' brother Johan was also learning to play the lute and could therefore have used the strings himself.

Many strings, and probably also those from abroad, were also traded in the Netherlands. Instrument makers, in particular, who always needed a large stock for their profession, seemed to have functioned as middlemen. We read, for instance, that in 1682 a guitar maker from The Hague, Jean de la Grange, took legal action against the musician 'Cornelis' Hacquart, whom we can identify as the well-known viola da gamba player and composer Carolus Hacquart. In 1680, La Grange had supplied him with *eenige fiool snaren* [some violin or viol strings]; namely 49 packs of strings at 2 guilders per pack (so for the considerable sum of f. 98 in total). Presumably he had not yet received that sum, or only part of it. It is interesting that a guitar maker also supplied strings for bowed instruments. In any case, dealing in strings appears to have been a

regular source of extra income for La Grange. We saw earlier how the instrument maker Gerrit Menslage had hundreds of packs of strings in his workshop, of all different kinds. Incidentally, he also had debts outstanding to two people for strings he had purchased from them: to Denijs Ballij for f. 12:10:- and to Reijnier Lampe for f. 2:12:8. It is not clear whether these people were dealers in strings or producers of strings.

For those with tighter budgets, locally produced strings would also have been available. The sources occasionally mention people who practise the profession of string maker, and two of them are recorded in The Hague. In 1639, a certain Adriaen Claeszoon, who owned a house on Lange Gracht, is referred to as a *snaermaecker* [string maker]. And in 1672, Anthonie van Capelle, master carpenter in Zierikzee, authorises the previously mentioned violin maker Thomas Rosseter to collect money in his name from the string maker Thobias Willemszoon.

But we should also remember that the popular cittern had steel or brass strings (i.e. made of drawn wire). This required a completely different specialised skill from that of processing sheep gut. We cannot make out whether the string makers mentioned produced one sort or the other, or possibly even both types. There is a curious case in The Hague in 1695, where at the request of Alette Feyt, widow of the brass founder Jacobus van Rosenburch, some people made a notarial statement that a sign had been nailed to the awning of the said Alette, with a paper on



Merry company, with a lutenist testing a new string. Engraving by Crispijn van der Passe, in *Nieuwen Jeucht Spiegel* (1617), p. 23

which was printed the text *hier vercoopt men alderhande Roomse snaren, by 't packet of stuck, yeder syn gerief* [here one can buy assorted Roman strings, per pack or singly, to suit all wishes]. This sign had been stolen on the night of 13 to 14 April. One of these witnesses was Pieter van Santen, who had printed the text. According to other witnesses, the word 'violin' had also been added to the word 'strings'. It is unclear what all the commotion was about. Maybe a passer-by who was not informed about the string trade, but of good Dutch Reformed character, had taken offence at the word 'Roman', which was then also in use as a definition of 'Catholic', and had therefore taken the sign away. Whatever the case, the Roman strings and the addition of 'violin' make it clear that it concerned gut strings. However, the saleswoman in question was the widow of a brass founder, who could have manufactured brass strings. So maybe the manufacture of and trade in both types of string belonged to the same branch of the profession. The aforementioned inventories do, in any case, mention both metal strings for citterns and gut strings for lutes, viols and violins.

## CHAPTER 8

### The Lute in the Arts of the Golden Age

The lute played a remarkable role in the literature and the visual arts of the 17th-century Dutch Republic. The instrument is mentioned again and again in literary texts, particularly in poems, and we see it frequently represented in paintings. The lute in the arts often had a metaphorical function; it was a symbol for something else. Behind the depicted or described world there is a moral message, which is sometimes easy and sometimes not so easy to interpret.

#### *The lute in literature*

In the literature of the Golden Age, the lute turns up regularly in the poetry of the major authors such as Pieter Corneliszoon Hooft, Constantijn Huygens and Jacob Cats, but also in poetry by lesser-known writers. Only rarely does the lute itself form the subject. This makes it all the more interesting that Hooft wrote a whole poem expressly devoted to Huygens' lute playing. *Op de ledighe uren van den heere Constantin Huighens* [On the idle hours of Mr Constantijn Huygens] is a reaction to the first edition of Huygens' *Otia* (1625). Hooft gives a poetic description of the strings on a lute in a series of witty comparisons, and he congratulates them on the good luck of being played upon by Huygens:

Oorenstrikken, zieljachts gaeren,  
Hartenetten, zoete snaeren,  
Banden die mijn zinneroer  
Vaster boeyt, dan eenigh snoer  
Van bekooringh, de gemoeden  
Die zich voor geen' wellust hoeden;  
Kronkelkoorden rank en slujk,  
Die, van levendigen buijk,  
Uw' geslacht en afkomst rekent,  
Ende maekt den dooden sprekendt;  
Lange lijven wervelvast  
Staend' aen hals en buijk gepast,  
Yder nae zijn' eisch gewrongen;  
Tongen, buitenmondsche tongen

*Snares for ears, yarn for catching souls,  
Heart-catching nets, sweet strings,  
Ropes that tie the rudder of my senses  
Tighter than any other kind of string  
Of enchantment, stirring feelings  
That avoid no ecstasy,  
Tender, slender, curly strings  
Whose nature and origins lie  
In sheep's bellies when alive  
But now make the dead wood sing;  
Long stringy bodies, tied to pegs,  
And lengthwise linking neck and belly,  
Stretched each to the right pitch;  
Tongues outside the mouth*

Van de gallem-rijke Luyt;  
 Waeghens die de klanken krujdt  
 Van de hongerige keelen,  
 En met haer als uw' gespeelen,  
 Trouwlijk op en neder gaet,  
 In een' maetschappij van maet;  
 Neuryzieke stemmeslingers;  
 Tolken van geleerde vingers;  
 Ach wat is 't u wel gelukt  
 Dat u Hujgens dujme drukt!  
 Hemel-hoogh wel moogt ghy vrylijk  
 Stoffen op zoo hoogh een hijlijk  
 Als ghy door zijn handt-geprangh,  
 Doet aen zijn doorluchten zangh.  
 [...]  
 Hollandt heeft hem hooren slaen,  
 Hollandt hooren geven knipjes,  
 Met de teere vingertipjes,  
 Op't getakel van de Luyt.

*Of the sonorous lute,  
 Carts that carry sounds  
 From music-longing throats,  
 And join with them as your playfellows,  
 Moving precisely together  
 In harmonious unanimity;  
 Humming-hungry chain of voices,  
 Interpreters of crafty fingers;  
 Ay, consider your great luck  
 That Huygens does your courses pluck.  
 Praise yourselves to the heavens  
 For this high marriage  
 When through the moving of his hands  
 You make his music sound.*

*Holland has heard him play,  
 Holland has heard him pluck  
 With tender finger tops  
 The rigging of the lute.*

There is probably no other poet who has described the lute or has used it poetically to characterise other objects as often as Huygens has. The long poem *Hofwijck*, about his beloved country house away from the court, where he found peace from his civic worries, opens with a consideration of the finiteness of the thread of life, which he compares to a lute string:

[...] Wie kent den draed van 't leven,  
 Hoe kort hy is, hoe taey? De snaer  
 die heldste luydt,  
 Scheidt d'eerste menighmael van  
 leven en van Luyt,  
 Verkracht en over-reckt, of met den  
 tijd versleten.  
 'k Heb over-reckt geweest; maer  
 ben'er deur gebeten:  
 Op 't slijten komt het aen; Twee  
 dingen maecken 't waer;  
 Of ick't ontveinsen wouw, mijn'  
 jaeren en mijn haer.  
 En als de snaer begint te ves'len en te  
 pluysen,

*[...] Who knows the thread of life,  
 How short it is, how strong? The string  
 that sounds the clearest  
 Is often the one to break first, in life and on  
 the lute,  
 Too forcefully played, too tightly strung or  
 worn over time.  
 I, too, have been over-stretched, but I have  
 persevered:  
 The wear and tear is clear, and obvious in  
 two things,  
 Even if I would ignore them: my years and  
 my hair.  
 And when a string begins to fray and snag*

Soo staet sy meestendeel op 't  
 schielicke verhuysen.  
 [...]

*It is soon ready to exchange the here for the  
 hereafter.*

Once, when he was ill, Huygens compared his tortured nerves with worn lute strings in his epigram 'Sinckingen' [Illness]:

Ick klage: men bespeelt mijn zen'wen  
 als een Luyt.  
 Beklager! Ghy en hoort noch snaren,  
 noch geluyd,  
 Maer let op mijn gesteen; gelijck ghy  
 dat hoort baren,  
 Soo gaen mijn zenuwen, mijn  
 afgespeelde snaren;  
 Ick volge toon op toon, en, doe ick  
 schoon mijn best,  
 Met d'eerste hef ick aen en swijgh  
 niet vóór de lest.  
 Eén voordeel, siecke Luyt! Kan ick u  
 niet benijen,  
 Ick steen een enckel stem, en ghy  
 gaet in partijen.

*I moan; my nerves are played on like a lute.  
 Sympathiser, you hear no string, no sound,  
 But listen to my groan; like the noise your  
 hear  
 So sound my nerves, my played-on strings.  
 I follow them note for note and though I do  
 my best,  
 I start with the first and go on to the last.  
 There's one advantage, sick lute, that I don't  
 envy you:  
 I groan a single voice, but you in multiple  
 parts.*

Huygens also uses the lute to criticise other people's bad habits. In another epigram, *Claesens pleiten* [Claes' pleas], he introduces a lawyer called Claes who strings grand words together without understanding what he is saying, like a lute that may sound well but has itself no idea of what it produces:

Claes heeft een' schorfde saeck seer  
 cierelijck bepleitt:  
 Maer, daer ick 'tstond en hoorden,  
 Geleeck ick all' die woorden  
 Bij kostelicke koorden  
 Die m' op slecht laken leght;  
 Hem selver by mijn' Luyt,  
 Die redelick wel luijdt,  
 En weet niet wat sij seght.

*Claes, in a nasty case, made a most elegant  
 plea.  
 But as I stood and listened to him  
 It seemed to me that all those words  
 Were like the costly threads  
 Used for braids on mediocre cloth;  
 While he was like my lute,  
 Who sounds quite good  
 But knows not what she says.*



The lute is even used by Huygens to characterise the noisy chattering of some women, such as in the epigram with the brief title *Luyt*:

Ick wenschte wel eensjes een Luyt in mijn armen,	<i>I sometimes wish I could hold a lute in my arms</i>
Met snaeren van sommige Vrouwtjens haer darmen;	<i>That was strung with the guts of some woman;</i>
Want, maeckt schapen ingewand sulcken gebaer,	<i>Because if sheep gut can make such a noise,</i>
Denckt, of het van onse Peet Annetje waer,	<i>Imagine they were those of Peet Annetje:</i>
Hoe sou dat dingh snappen, en snerpen en snarren!	<i>How the thing would chatter, squeak and scold!</i>
Het leeck wel een Luyt; maer het waer een Gitarren.	<i>It would seem a lute, but it would be a guitar.</i>

The word ‘Gitarren’ probably has a double meaning here, but it is hard to say exactly what; the 19th-century editor of the poem, J. van Vloten, claims it is a play on sound: ‘Giet-arren’ [angry]. At the same time, the guitar, the bastard lute as Huygens calls it elsewhere, is here dismissed as a second-rate instrument.

Most of the time, however, the lute in literary text was not used in such imaginative, ad hoc comparisons, but it is described in several standard roles. More than anything, the instrument was used as an accompaniment to singing, and it is in that capacity that the lute occurs in many poems; in the Golden Age after all, poetry and song were closely connected. Love was, as it is now, a widespread subject for popular singers or poets, mostly in the sad form of disappointed love. A fine example of a lover’s complaint in which the lute plays a prominent role occurs in the volume *Zeeusche Nachtegael, ende des selfs dryderley gesang* [Zeeland Nightingale and its three-fold singing] (Middelburg 1623). A number of poets contributed to it, among them the Middelburg painter Adriaen van de Venne, who, perhaps influenced by his real profession, gives an evocative description of a young man sitting by a pond, sadly musing, who sings to his mirror image in the water accompanied by a lute:



Adriaen van de Venne, illustration (engraving) from *Zeeusche Nachtegael* (1623) p. 55

*Zeeusche mey-clacht, ofte schyn-  
kycker*

*Zeeland May Complaint, or semblance-seer*

sNachts voor den Meyen-dach,  
ontrent den koelen morghen,  
Als yder leyt en rust van alle  
daechsche sorghen,  
Doe was ick vol ghepeyns, en ging  
heel ongherust  
Betreen al voort en voort de soete  
Zeeusche cust:

*On the eve of May-day, in the cool  
morning  
When people sleep and rest from daily cares,  
I was deep in thought, and feeling restless  
I took a stroll along the Zeeland coast*

[...]

Ick had een goede Luyt, om dat ick  
sou vermaken  
Mijn over-droeven geest; ick hadde  
lust te waken,

*I had a good lute so I might cheer  
My over-saddened soul; I wished to stay  
awake,*

Ick speelden en ick sanck somtijts met luyder keel,	<i>And played and sometimes sang aloud</i>
Als nu en dan een stuck, en somtijts het geheel	<i>Now part of a song, then all of it</i>
Van lieffelicke pijn, en druckelicke lachjes,	<i>Full of love's pain and melancholic smiles;</i>
En riep somtijts wat stijf, en somtijts weder sachtjes;	<i>Sometimes I called out, sometimes I whispered,</i>
En somtijts docht ick weer, Och, och! dat mijn ellent	<i>And then again I thought: Oh, oh, if only my sorrow,</i>
(Dat niemant niet en siet) toch mochte zijn bekend!	<i>(which no one sees) were known.</i>
[...]	
Ick stelde weer mijn Luyt, met yder snaer te rekenen,	<i>I tuned again my lute by stretching every string,</i>
De quint, second, en bas, bestont ick hooch te trekken,	<i>The highest, the second and the lowest, pulling them up,</i>
Op dattet soet accoord wat door de boomen stoof,	<i>So that a sweet chord sounded through the trees,</i>
Niet al te soet of hart, niet al te dof of doof:	<i>Not too sweet nor sharp, nor too subdued or dull.</i>
Soo haest mijn Luyts-geluyt wat luyd' begon te spelen,	<i>When my lute began to sing more loudly,</i>
Begonder een geluyt als nieu geluyt te quelen,	<i>Another sound joined in the singing;</i>
Ten was geen weder-slach van mijn geslagen Luyt,	<i>It was not the echo of my lute,</i>
Maer 'twas een soet gedril van eenich vreemt getuyt.	<i>But the sweet trembling of some sort of flute.</i>
[...]	

At the line 'I had a good lute' there is a note: *Luyt-slaen is const en verweect een blijden geest* [Lute playing is an art and calls forth joy in the soul]. Another note, further down, explains the sweet trembling that his lute music provokes: *Het spelen verweect den Zeeuschen Nachtegael* [The playing wakes up the Zeeland nightingale].

This poem is about the familiar theme of the consoling effect of music, in this case lute playing. The same theme is also the subject of the engraving *Singing couple* (with lute) by Schelte à Bolswert after Theodoor Rombouts (p. 199), with a comment that translates as: 'Artful music achieves with six notes the invigoration of the unhappy and the support of the weary through consolation'. In the original Latin text the six notes, ut-re-mi-fa-sol-la, are graphically represented: *MUSICA docta facit per sex discrimina vocum, UT REcreet MIseros Faveat SOLamine LAssis.*

But sometimes sorrow can be so overpowering that even music can no longer bring comfort. In *Goddelycke wenschen* [Divine wishes] (1629) by Justus de Harduwijn, the hero is so overcome by grief that his singing catches in his throat and his fingers grow stiff when he tries to elicit sweet sounds from his lute:

[...]

Maer laes! de doot die 't al doet  
scheen,  
Die schaeckelt mijnen druck in een,  
Noyt mijnen druck en liet ick vaeren.  
Speeld' ick oyt iet tot mijn ghenoegh,  
Mijn herte was de luyt' die'ck sloegh,  
En mijn gheklaegh de soete snaeren.

*But alas! Death, which severs all,*

*Unites itself with my sorrow,  
And my sorrow was infinite.  
If ever I played something for my pleasure,  
My heart was the lute I struck,  
And my laments the sweet strings.*

Met dese luyt ick mijnen tijdt  
En mijne jonghe jeughdt verslijt,  
Verr' heele daeghen ende nachten  
Ay my, helaes! hoe dat 't ghesucht  
Mijn herteken als-dan ontvlucht,  
Dat ick wel waende te versmachten!

*With this lute I spend my time  
And the days of my youth,  
All my days and my nights.  
Ay, alas! How did the sighs  
Break away from my heart,  
So that I thought I would perish.*

[...]

Hoe menich-mael hebb' ick  
gheproeft  
Naer mijn ghewoont' en mijn  
maniere  
Al off ick schoon daer sat bedroeft  
Noch te doen ruyschen mijne liere,  
Off aen mijn dick-bestoven luyt  
Te gheven eenich soet gheluyt!

*How oft have I not tried,*

*As was my custom and my way,*

*When I sat there steeped in sorrow,  
Still to get my lyre to sound.  
Or from my oft-played lute  
To coach a sweet sound.*

Maer wat! eer ick een toontjen vondt  
Off eenich snaerken heeft  
ghekloncken,  
Den druck betoomde mijnen mondt  
De traenen zijn my af-ghesoncken,  
Jae als ick eenich spel op-nam  
Soo voeld' ick mijne vinghers stram,

*But ah! Before I had found a note  
Or any string had sounded*

*Sadness silenced my mouth,  
And tears came to my eyes.  
Yes, every time I wanted to play  
I felt my fingers grow stiff;*

Al dat ick dede was voor niet	<i>All I did led to nothing,</i>
De Sangh-goddinnen hadd'ick teghen,	<i>The goddesses of song were against me:</i>
Hoe soud'ick konnen toetsen iet	<i>How could I play anything</i>
Daer 't allegaeder was verlegghen,	<i>When everything went wrong for me,</i>
Daer d'handelinghe soo sy plocht	<i>And the routine she always uses</i>
Nu niet een siere meer en docht!	<i>Was worth nothing any longer.</i>

When the lute figures in literary texts, it usually stands for something else; it is often a symbol for poetry. This is probably because the lute had a Classical connotation; it was associated with the lyre, Apollo's attribute and the instrument poets used to accompany themselves in Antiquity. In the procession on the occasion of the inauguration of Leiden University on 8 February 1575, for instance, Apollo figured among other mythological personages holding a lyre. In the 17th century we see both the lyre and the lute used to symbolise the art of poetry. Jan Six van Chandelier, for instance, talks about *Vondels yvoore Roomsche lier* [Vondel's ivory Roman lyre], while the lute as a metaphor for poetry is mentioned by Vondel: *O vrome vader, glori van mijn' luyt* [O lofty father, glory of my lute] and a little later by Lukas Schermer *Wat Held o Clio sult gy loven / En pryzen op uw schelle luyt?* [Which hero, O Clio, will you praise and applaud on your clear-sounding lute?]. Vondel praises Pieter Corneliszoon Hooft for his translation of the well-known French poet Marot so that by means of Hooft's lute, poetry that originated along the Loire could be enjoyed along the Dutch rivers Vecht and IJ:

[...]	
Het sij sijn' sinlijckheen uytheemsche tael ontkleeden,	<i>His emblems do explain the foreign verse</i>
En wisselden Marots uytmuntenste aerdigheden	<i>And translate the excellent wit of Marot</i>
In moederspraeck: of met de luytpen van yvoir	<i>Into our mother tongue, and with the ivory lute pen</i>
Verweecten Vecht en Y te luystren na de Loir'.	<i>encouraged Vecht and IJ to listen to the Loire.</i>
[...]	

Incidentally, in another version of the same poem, the word *luytpen* [lute pen] was replaced by the identical concept *slagbbeen* [striking bone]; Vondel here refers to the idea that in Classical Antiquity the lute was played not with the fingers but with a plectrum. The noble material ivory, a recurrent feature in this context, was obviously associated with lofty poeticism.

The lute as a poetic attribute surfaces again and again. On the occasion of the Peace of Münster (1648), Jan Vos made an appeal in a long poem: *Op heldendichters, op, versnaart uw' schorre luiten, / En voeght u aan de rey. De Krijgh is afgestreên. / De Vreede lacht ons toe* [Arise, epic poets,

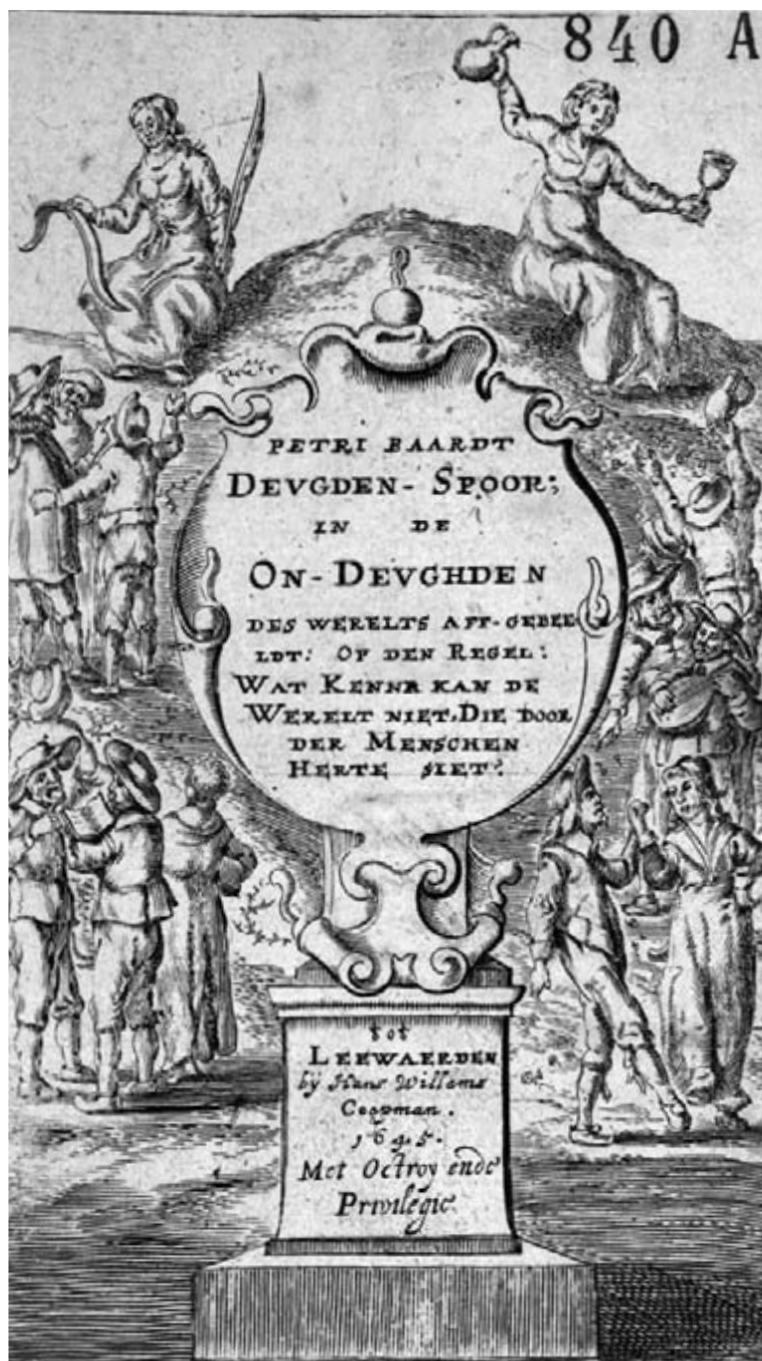
up, restring your husky lutes, and join the choral dance. The war is over. Peace smiles at us]. In 1624 the young and as yet unknown Constantijn Huygens addressed the ‘voting towns’ of Holland and West-Friesland – the towns that were allowed to vote in the States of Holland – with a poem that starts:

Den stemmenden Steden van Holland ende Westvriesland Geluck.	<i>Well-wishes to the voting towns of Holland and West-Friesland.</i>
Soo scheid' U Nijd noch Tijd, soo werd' hy noyt geboren Die naer uw' schande tracht', die van uw' scha' will' hooren, Getrouwe Susteren, hoort yeder van't geluyd Van uw' bekende Stem den weerslagh op mijn' Luyt, Mijn' onbekende Luyt, maer best- genegen Snaren Ten roem van uwen naem en hoorenswaerde maeren. [...]	<i>May hostility nor time separate you, and may never the man be born Who is out to shame you and wishes to hear of your loss, Faithful sisters; may each of you hear of the sound Of your well-known voices the echo on my lute, My unknown lute, but whose strings are strongly disposed To announce the glory of your name and your interesting tales.</i>

If poetry can be compared to the classical lyre or lute, a contemporary poet may be compared to the classical players of such instruments. This is what Hooft does when Constantijn Huygens is setting sail for England. Hooft wishes him a safe return and hopes that the winds will keep quiet. But if they do not, Arion will calm them down with his lute:

[...] Geen noodt oock. Schipbreck kan Arjon niet vertzaeghen Dien de Dolfijn, als 't nauwt, moet dienen tot een schujt. Sijn sang sal baeren bats en lujtruftighe bujen Licht tegens eighen aerdt van toghten woest oprujen, En maecken zeedigh zee en stormen, met sijn lujt.	<i>No fear then. Shipwreck will not strike terror into Arion; If he is in danger, a dolphin forms his boat. Easily his singing makes wild waves and thundering storms Take up arms against their very roughness, Seas and storms he will tame with his lute.</i>
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Title page of Petrus Baardt's *Deugden-Spoor* (Leeuwarden, 1645)

Arion was a well-known harpist who had been thrown overboard by pirates at sea, but had been allowed to keep his harp. A dolphin took him ashore on his back when Arion had charmed him with the bewitching sound of his music.

The lute, however, had another, much more down-to-earth connotation. In the perception of many people, music in general, and therefore lute music as well, had a pernicious influence. Music only distracted one's attention from the more serious aspects of life, and soon led to that ultimate form of levity: dancing. And it was common knowledge that dancing, which obviously took place in mixed company, automatically led to greater licentiousness. We have seen earlier how Nicolaes Vallet had to cope with such negative feelings about music and dance (pp. 60-61).

One example in which the lute is associated with idleness and immorality occurs in a poem by Petrus Baardt that appeared in 1645 called *Deugden-Spoor, in de On-Deughden des werelts aff-gebeeldt* [The Trail of Virtue shown in the Vices of the world], in which the author deals with all kinds of objectionable people and characteristics. An endless row of people with bad habits passes by, such as:

[...]	
Een Musicant, een Violist,	<i>A musician, a violinist,</i>
Die van Musijck noch Noten wist,	<i>Knowing nothing of music nor of notes;</i>
Siet naer een goet Collegie uyt,	<i>Is looking for good company</i>
En treckt fijn Snaren op de Luyt	<i>And plucks expertly on the strings of his lute.</i>
[...]	

As so often, a picture – in this case, the title page of the book – tells us more than a thousand words.

We see all sorts of vices, such as drinking (top right) and dancing (bottom right), while at the top left a lady with a feather in her hand, which in this context means that she is a lady of easy virtue, forms an attraction for three gentlemen who are not even discouraged by the snake she holds in her other hand. In the midst of all these undesirables a lutenist is playing to accompany the dancers.

The association of music, and thus the lute, with levity and even sexual depravity was widespread. Jacob Cats speaks a word of warning in his poem *Klagende Maeghden* [Complaining Maidens] (1634):

Danck-liet, van yemant die van een  
sware sieckte verlost is

*Song of thanks from a person cured of a  
serious disease*

Myn ziel berst nu van vreugden uyt,  
En staeckt u swaer verdriet,  
Gaet neemt ter hant u soete luyt,  
En singt een aerdigh liet;  
Een liet, maer niet van lichte stof,  
Oock niet vol geylen spot;  
Maer enckel danck en enckel lof,  
Tot prijs van uwen God.  
[...]

*My soul, burst forth for joy  
And stop your sad lamenting;  
Go, take up your sweet lute  
And sing a beautiful song;  
Not a light-hearted song  
And not a song of wanton mockery;  
But only thanks and only praise  
In honour of your God.*

In the same book we find Cats' *Klachte van de vijf dwase Maegden* [Lament of the five foolish Maidens] in which he describes how five wise maidens, who had remained virtuous, are allowed into the festive hall of the heavenly groom, whereas the five foolish maidens who had succumbed to lusts, 'to foolishness, to laziness, to all lascivious games' (*tot dwaesheyt, tot ghemack, tot alle dertel spel*), find the door locked, and that forever. Cats compares this impenetrable steel door with the maidens' metaphorical emotional doors that can be opened all too easily by wooing, lamenting, or the sweet sound of the lute strings:

[...]

De deure van een maeght (ghelijck  
wy eertijts sagen  
In onse soete jeught) die sluyt oock  
wonder vast,  
Maer door een soet gevley of door  
een bitter klagen,  
Ontluyckse menighmael voor haren  
droeve gast:

*The door to a maiden's heart (as we have  
seen  
In our sweet youth) is also firmly closed,  
But gentle flattery or sad laments  
Will often open it for her sorrowful guest;*

Sy met een versche roos of edel kruyt  
besteken,  
Of met het soet gheluyt van snaren  
spel vereert,  
Heeft dickmael (sonder kracht) haer  
open laten breken,  
En al het voorigh leet in blyschap  
omgekeert.

*Plying her with a fresh rose or with  
precious herbs  
Or honouring her with the sweet sound of  
strings,  
Will often (without force) break it open,  
And past sadness will have turned to joy.*

Maer dese stale deur en laet haer niet bewegen,	<i>But this steel door will not be moved,</i>
Schoon yemant op de luyt of op syn boesem slaet;	<i>Though someone plays the lute or beats his breast;</i>
Het is met haer eylaes! voor eeuwich soo gelegen,	<i>This door, alas!, is for all eternity</i>
Dat zy met diamant wel hart versegelt staet.	<i>Sealed fast with hardest diamond.</i>

### *Emblems*

The interpretation of the symbolic roles the lute could play is simplified by the existence of emblem books, volumes with *emblemata* (plural of *emblemata*), more or less realistic pictures that are metaphorically explained by a motto and one or more descriptions, often in poetic form. In the 16th and 17th centuries, emblem books were printed all over Europe, and to judge by their numbers and many reprints they must have been very popular indeed. Originally the text was in Latin, but the vernacular gradually came into use. In Dutch emblem books we often find two or three languages per emblem: Latin, French and Dutch, occasionally English.



*Nieuwen Jeucht Spiegel* (1617), p. 109

The earliest known book of emblems, entitled *Emblematum liber* [Book of emblems], by Andrea Alciato, appeared in Italy in 1531. The genre then spread quickly, but it was not until 1608 that the first emblem collection appeared in the Dutch Republic: *Emblemata amatoria* [Love Emblems]. It was published anonymously, but before long it turned out that Daniël Heinsius was the author. It was followed by other volumes by known and lesser-known writers. Jacob Cats, for instance, debuted in 1618 with the emblem book *Silenus Alcibiadis, sive Proteus*, which was reprinted in 1627 in an extended edition under the title *Sinne- en minnebeelden* [Symbols and love pictures]. They are luxury editions, printed with a great deal of white on the page, and illustrated with carefully executed prints by well-known artists. Therefore they were expensive; depending on the format, they might well have cost something between two and five guilders, and that at a time when a skilled craftsman would earn around one guilder a day. They were clearly aimed at the well-to-do; in the first decades of the 17th century, there was a ready audience of young men with great purchasing power and a love of novelties.

Emblems commented on and advised about all sorts of matters political and religious, but their main subject was love and all the joys and burdens associated with it. In the Dutch Republic, love was in fact the key subject; it is indicative that the first volume by Heinsius was entirely devoted to love, as its title shows, and the Dutch title of Cats' very popular *Sinne- en minnebeelden* speaks for itself. These emblems were meant to playfully instruct the readers, especially young readers, in the mysteries of love and crossed love, partner choice, and marital fidelity. One way of putting the message across effectively was to warn against the negative excesses of love, such as lechery, adultery and whoring. The moral message was attractively wrapped so as to form an often titillating picture and or text, with the added joy of ambiguity because the message was disguised. The appeal of the enigmatic aspect is expressed in the title *Enigmata sive Emblemata Amatoria of Nieuwe Nederduytsche Gedichten ende Raedtselen* [Love-related enigmas or emblems or new Dutch poems and riddles] from 1624.

The lute turns up in emblems quite frequently and, as is to be expected in the genre, it usually has a metaphorical function. To start with, the lute can symbolise the sense of hearing. One example of this occurs in the anonymously published *Nieuwen Jeucht Spiegel* [New Mirror for the Young] (1617), in which the five senses are also represented in a *Liedeken op de vijf Sinnen* [Song on the Five Senses]. Hearing is represented in the form of people who are playing harps, lutes and viols, and are dancing:

'tGhehoor

*Hearing*

Terstont quamen sy voort  
ghedronghen,

*At once they thronged together*

Met Herp'n, Luyten, Velen goet,  
Sy dansten, speelden ende songhen,  
't Ghehoor ontsluyten doet.

*With harps and lutes, and fiddles fine;  
They danced, played and sang,  
So all ears were opened.*



Musica schoon was daer bekent,  
 Elc hiel den thoon op't Instrument,  
 Delicaet, op zijn maet  
 Seere manierich,  
 [...]

*Beautiful music they had mastered,  
 Each playing his own instrument,  
 Delicately, keeping time  
 And very skilfully,*

If music is chosen to represent hearing, any musical instrument would suffice, but the honour often fell to the lute. The reason may be that it was already a frequent element in the pictorial idiom. The picture just mentioned shows a lute player as the only musician.

Music is also synonymous with harmony, of course, so that concept could also be represented by a musical instrument. The lute is particularly suited to that role, because it is in itself capable of producing harmony. Renaissance people were fully aware of the fact that in Classical Antiquity the lute (or in any case its precursor) was seen as the embodiment of civic unity. In the emblem literature we find the lute as an image of alliance, good government and political unity.

Even more often, the lute represents like-mindedness in human relationships, and especially in love between husband and wife. In his *Proteus* (1618) Jacob Cats illustrates this by laying a straw on the lute, which will start sounding along with another lute when a string is plucked



Jacob Cats, *Proteus* (1618), p. 85



on the latter. It is the same with husband and wife: if they love each other, they have the same feelings, even when they are apart.

Ick was met Roosemont onlangs gaen wand'len buyten,	<i>Not long ago I took a stroll with Rosy-lips outdoors.</i>
Men hadd' tot ons vermaeck aldaer ghebracht twee luyten.	<i>For our delight, two lutes were there laid down.</i>
Ick stelde dees op die, en leyd' een stroo op d'een,	<i>I tuned them both alike and put a straw on one of them.</i>
So haest den thoon geleeck het stroo dat spranck daer heen.	<i>When striking a tone on one, the straw jumped up on the other one.</i>
Siet, Roosemont, aldus roert ghy my sonder raecken,	<i>Look Rosy-lips, thus do you move me without touching</i>
En treckt my sonder hant: eer ghy my cont ghenaecken	<i>And draw me near without hands; even before you came close</i>
Soo werd' ick u ghewaer. Die Venus eens krijght vast,	<i>I was aware of you. A man who is in Venus' power,</i>
Merckt, dat hy niet en siet: voelt, dat hy niet tast.	<i>Perceives what he sees not, feels what he does not touch.</i>

Much later, in 1703, Willem den Elger discussed the theme in the same way in *Zinne-beelden der liefde* [Symbols of Love]: in love there is harmony, and in the picture it is illustrated by a lute-playing couple.



Willem den Elger, *Zinne-beelden der liefde* (1703), p. 297

Overeenkomst verwekt liefde	<i>Harmony breeds love</i>
Hoe naaw, ô Liefde moet uwe overeenkomst weezen!	<i>How intimate, o Love, must your harmony be!</i>
Nooit is uw vreugd heel veel; als hier iets aan ontbreekt,	<i>Your joy cannot be great if there is lack of it.</i>
En als men overal een zuiv'ren eendragt kweekt	<i>When everywhere the purest concord reigns,</i>
Is uw geluk wel haast ten hoogste top gereezen.	<i>Your happiness has risen to the greatest height.</i>
Gelyk men in 't muzyk meest de overeenkomst mint,	<i>Just as in music people love harmony best,</i>
Is 't de overeenkomst ook, die Liefde 't naawste bind.	<i>It is harmony that binds Love closest.</i>

Gabriel Rollenhagen, *Nucleus emblematum* (1611), p. 70

As we have seen, music, and more specifically the lute, both have a positive connotation; they symbolise the harmony of love. What is more: music, song and dance awaken love and are therefore part of courtship and the game of love. The relation between music and love is a well-known motif. As Jacob Cats put it: 'love causes singing'. The theme *Amor docet musicam* [Love instructs music] is also illustrated in an emblem in Gabriel Rollenhagen's *Nucleus emblematum* [Quintessence of emblems] (Cologne 1611), again with the lute as the instrument.

Yet another illustration of harmony between a loving couple occurs in a songbook entitled *Cupido's lusthof ende der amoreusen bogaert* [Cupid's garden and the orchard of lovers] (Amsterdam 1613), where we see a violinist and a woman playing a lute-like instrument. The text phrases it as follows: *Eij hemel vreucht wat jeucht ons t'hert / als t'soet accoort vereenicht wert* [Ah heavenly joy, how our heart rejoices at the union of a sweet accord].



*Cupido's lusthof ende der amoreusen bogaert* (1613), p. 13



*Nieuwen Jeucht Spiegel* (1617), p. 41

This close relationship between music and love is also the subject of some of the emblems in *Nieuwen Jeucht Spiegel*. The poem that accompanies an engraving of music-making and dancing couples, again with the lute accompanying them, bears the title *Danssen, Spelen end' soetkens Singhen, / Doen de Liefde uut den slaep ontspringhen* [Dancing, music and sweet singing cause love to awaken from her sleep]. And in the text we find the significant line *Het soete Snaer-gheklanc, loct u tot d'Minnen-spel* [The sweet sound of strings tempts you to courting].

In another emblem in the same collection, we read: *'tGhesanck en Snaren-spel / Betaemt der Liefden wel* [Singing and playing the strings are conducive to love]. The poet Jacob Westerbaen phrased it as follows: *Leert op de Luyt, leert op de Clavecijmbel spelen / De snaeren hebben macht om yemands hert te steelen* [Learn to play the lute, the harpsichord: strings have the power to steal a person's heart].

But where one person counts love among the pleasant items in life, another person tends to see the dangers first. Worldly entertainment and amorous pleasures, after all, lead only too quickly to undesirable vices and thus to shame and dishonour. In the *Nieuwen Jeucht Spiegel*, repeatedly quoted here, we are told to bear in mind the chaste Lucretia, a famous figure from Classical Antiquity who protected her virtue by not strolling masked through 'Venus' nightly pleasure grounds', and by staying at home doing needlework, forgoing wine, and not listening to the playing on the sweet-stringed lute:





*Nieuwen Jeucht Spiegel* (1617), p. 181

De Nacht, de Minn', en koele Wijn,  
Van veel overdaet d'oorsaeck zijn.

*Night, Love and cool Wine  
To luxury they do incline*

T'Lof d'welc Lucretia ghewan in alle  
Landen,  
Nopende d'Eerbaerheyt, daer sy in  
was vermaert,  
Bestont alleen daer in, dat sy zebaer  
van aert  
Bleef alijt in haer Huys werckende  
met haer Handen:  
Sy dronc daer niet den Wijn, met  
gheselschap vol schanden,  
Sy hoorden niet na 'tspel der Luyten  
soet ghesnaert,  
Sy hiel daer gheen ghepraet, waer in  
haer d'oneer baert,

*The praise Lucretia won in all the lands  
Because of her chastity, for which she was  
known,  
Only meant that she, with her modest  
nature,  
Always stayed at home, engaged in needle-  
work;  
She drank no wine in wicked company,  
She did not listen to the plucking of the  
sweet-stringed lute,  
She never shared in gossip, which only leads  
to dishonour,*

Sy liep ooc niet vermont in Venus  
 Nacht-waeranden:  
 Maer aen haer vroed Ghesin in  
 soberheyt end' Eere  
 Diende sy tot voorbeelt, end' der  
 deuchden leere,  
 Door de ghewisse daet, niet in't  
 uutwendich schijn,  
 Sy beminde den naem, en 'twerc der  
 Vroomheyt seere,  
 Hebbende wel doormerct dat de  
 Nacht, Min en Wijn  
 Van overdaet en schant, den rechten  
 oorspronck zijn.

*She did not venture, masked, in Venus'  
 nightly pleasure gardens;  
 But in her wise nature, marked by frugality  
 and honour  
 She served as an example and model of  
 virtue;  
 In her real actions, not in outward pretence  
 She loved the name and the work of  
 Wisdom,  
 Being well convinced that night, love and  
 wine  
 Cause acts of impropriety and shame.*

Yet another emblem in the same book tells us *Die te veel kust en tast, Wort van den Gheck verrast* [He who kisses and feels too much, will be surprised by the Fool]; in the picture accompanying this motto there is indeed some devoted kissing and fondling going on, again to the accompaniment of a lutenist.



*Nieuwen Jeucht Spiegel (1617), p. 49*





*Nieuwen Jeucht Spiegel (1617), p. 209*

In short, it is not surprising that in another emblem, still in the same book, we are shown how a young man is torn between the Church (a clergyman with a chain) and the World (a woman with a silken thread), while the worldly joys at his feet are symbolised with a lute, a tennis racket, playing cards and dice.

In the language of symbols, then, the lute was closely connected with worldly joys and love. Taking the thought a step further, the instrument was linked to the sexual act, sometimes very explicitly – 17th-century people may have had strict morals, but they were anything but prudish. Consider, for instance, the sonnet below which appeared in the anonymously published *Nieuwe Nederduytsche Gedichten ende Raedtselen* [New Dutch Poems and Riddles] from 1624, which appears to be about lute playing, if we go by the accompanying picture, but which evokes quite different associations:

Om 'taengenaemste spel dat ick weet  
in mijn leven,  
Neem ick de snaer ter hant na noens  
tot tijdt verdrijf,

*For the sweetest game I know in life,*

*After the hour of noon, to kill time, I take  
the string in hand;*



*Nieuwe Nederdutsche Gedichten ende Raedtselen* (1624), p. 74

Ick stelse, handelse tot dat sy is heel  
stijf,

En wel te deegh bequaem om my  
ghenucht te gheven.

Ich worp my op mijn bed en sonder  
te verdrieten

Druck ickse op mijn schoot, ick  
neemse in mijn erm,

En my dan roerende met een  
ghewenscht ghescherm

Weet ick mijn herts verlang met  
vreuchden te genieten.

Maer soo dan altemets de snaer comt  
af te gaen

En eenichsins verslapt, soo neem  
ickse weer aen

En trach dat soete spel van nieus  
weer aen te vangen.

Also maect my mijn lief veel vreught  
so langh de snaer

Te degen is ghestelt, en dan ga ick  
van daer

Moed' maer int minste niet versaet  
van mijn verlanghen.

*I stretch her and handle her till she's all stiff*

*And in the right condition to give me  
pleasure.*

*I sit down on my bed and then without  
regret*

*I press her on my lap, I take her in my arms,*

*And by stirring longing movements*

*I manage to enjoy my dearest wish.*

*But when gradually the string goes lax*

*And loosens, I take her in hand once more*

*And try to play the sweet game again from  
the start.*

*And so my love provides much pleasure as  
long as the string*

*Is nice and taut; and finally I leave,*

*Tired, but not in the least sated in my  
desire.*

Lute playing thus becomes a metaphor for sex, and as such the concept of lax versus taut strings occurs more than once, for instance in the first lines of a song by Johan van Heemskerck in his *Inleydinghe tot het ontwerp van een Batavische Arcadia* [Introduction to the design of Batavian Arcadia] (1637): *Wanneer u schoone handt / De snaren kunstigh spant* [When your pretty hand competently stretches the strings].

The theme of lute playing as a disguised description of lovemaking is also to be found in more folk-like writings. In a folk song from around 1600, possibly from Gelderland, it is the sole subject. A young man is asked by a woman to play her lute, and he doesn't mind complying with such a kind request:

Te Venloe all in dye goyde statt	<i>In the good town of Venlo</i>
Ontmoet ick eyn jonfrouwe schoen,	<i>I met a pretty girl.</i>
Vrundelick dat sy my batt:	<i>Kindly she asked me:</i>
'Knaep,' seide sy, 'dat u Got loen,	<i>'Lad', she said, 'may God reward you,</i>
Segt my dye waerheit sonder hoenen,	<i>But tell me truly, without deceit,</i>
Dat u Got hoede ongeschent:	<i>So that God may keep you safe and sound;</i>
Weit ghy yet vanden snaeren doenen?	<i>Are you competent at playing the strings?</i>
Ick heb soe goyden instrument.'	<i>I have such a good instrument.'</i>
Vrundelick spraeck ick tot oer:	<i>Kindly I spoke to her:</i>
'Van allen spoel kan ick genoech,	<i>I am well versed in every game;</i>
Ick byn eyn goit luytener,	<i>I am a good a lutenist,</i>
Had ick eyn luyte nae myn	<i>If I have a good lute at my disposal.'</i>
genoechde.'	
'Ick heb dye beste dye ye wyff	<i>I have the best that ever woman</i>
gedroech,	<i>    possessed,</i>
Om te spelen wael te cueren.'	<i>To be tried out and played.'</i>
[...]	

And so forth. The young man is to play the top part, and she the underlying one. At first it doesn't quite work because the strings are new and wet and they don't do what they should be doing, however much he twists the tuning pegs. Then the highest string snaps loose. However, when all the troubles are overcome, by putting the lute 'stiffly on his chest', he can play the song to the end to the satisfaction of them both.

### *The lute as a symbol in paintings*

Now that we have seen how symbols and symbolism play a large role in the literature of the Golden Age, it will not come as a surprise that the same devices are applied in Dutch 17th-century paintings. Paintings, too, can often be read as symbolic representations that hold a mirror up to the onlooker, or teach him or her a moral lesson. The key to deciphering this language of symbols is mainly found in the emblem books we have just described, because there the images are explained in words.

The hidden messages in these paintings would often have been clear to a 17th-century public, since they were aware of the codes needed to read the symbolic language in what was in fact a party game for the elite. Roemer Visscher wrote in the preface to his *Sinnepoppen* (Amsterdam 1614) that the idea was that not every Tom, Dick and Harry would be able to get the message at first sight. But even for the happy few, deciphering the message was not always that simple; the codes were flexible enough to leave room for ambiguity. We saw, for instance, that the lute in combination with a man and a woman could stand for marital harmony as well as for illicitness.

The ambiguity was, of course, one of the very charms of the system, but it makes it difficult to grasp for the modern observer, who is not trained in reading that pictorial language. The symbolism and the allegory in paintings must be 'read' in the absence of the verbal explanation given in emblems and is therefore often difficult to interpret. The great expert in this field is Eddy de Jongh, who introduced symbolism in 17th-century painting to the public at large in the exhibition *Tot lering en vermaak* in the Rijksmuseum in 1976. Since then, other art historians have occasionally raised their eyebrows about his views, but their criticism mainly concerns details of his interpretations, or the feeling that he went too far. For most experts, however, the fundamental insight that literary texts and paintings were, to 17th-century readers and observers, more than what was described or depicted, remains unquestioned. What follows is largely based on De Jongh's findings.

Pictorial symbolism is mainly found in what is called genre painting; those pictures characteristic of Dutch art in the Golden Age that seem drawn directly from life: peasants dancing in a tavern, a small boy blowing bubbles, a woman delousing a child, et cetera. They seem to be realistic portrayals, but they are not snapshots of ordinary life; they were composed by the artist in his studio. It is obvious that the paintings aimed to imitate reality in a way that was as true-to-life as possible, and they are, both in their rendering of textures and situations, 'realistic'. Yet at the same time it is beyond doubt that painters often used those pictures to put across a notion or a warning, or to give the observers a moral message. They usually did so by letting the depicted people carry out a particular act, or by providing the paintings with carefully selected details that have an air of ordinariness, but that are often put together in unusual combinations that, on further consideration, turn out to determine the meaning of the painting. When Karel van Mander (1548-1606) put a skull, an hourglass, a smoking incensory and a shadow on the wall, even the most casual of observers would understand that these are references to death and transience.



Jacob Matham after Karel van Mander, *Symbols of death*, engraving

This combination of realistic forms with symbolic thinking was characteristic of 17th-century painting, both in the Netherlands and beyond. People looking at such representations drew enjoyment from them at several levels: the accuracy of the depiction of a familiar, everyday reality; the game of disguising and discovering the message (Jacob Cats in this connection mentions *aengename duysterheyt*, 'agreeable obscurity'); and certainly also the deeper thought or moral lesson itself, which appealed to the need to feel part of a social, religious or intellectual group.

We should be careful not to draw conclusions too easily from specific representations, because many of the concepts are multi-interpretable. By way of warning, De Jongh gives the example of three engravings in which a lute-playing man (in one case he is actually playing a cittern) accompanies a singing woman, but, as their titles indicate, these pictures symbolise three different things: *Sanguineus*, *Terra*, and *De twintigjarige leeftijd* [Full-bloodedness, Earth and Twenty Years Old].



Pieter de Jode after Maerten de Vos, *Sanguineus*. EngravingChrispijn de Passe after Maerten de Vos, *Terra*. Engraving





Chrispijn de Passe, *Twenty Years Old*. Engraving

As De Jongh sees it, these three meanings are not as diverse as the titles suggest. Full-bloodedness, Earth and Youth had everything to do with love, of course, and were traditionally related to each other. There is, however, a discrepancy between the two pictures based on Maerten de Vos: in the age-old theories concerning the four elements and the four human ‘humours’, the fiery temperament was traditionally linked to the element Air, whereas Earth was connected to a melancholic disposition. This example shows that artists were less consistent in their application of iconographic programmes than we would expect or than was prescribed by a contemporary theoretician such as Gerard de Lairese. Presumably painters would have sometimes been deliberately ambiguous or may have even wanted to create a sense of mystery in their work.

We have seen that the lute plays a prominent part in the pictorial arts of the Golden Age, and that the instrument appears on innumerable prints and paintings. That it is specifically the lute that occurs so often may be a result of its high status as the ‘Queen of musical Instruments’, and of the Classical connotations linked to it. The artistic challenge presented by the lute – due to its shape, which is so difficult to place in perspective – may also have tempted painters to choose this



Schelte à Bolswert, *Singing couple*, after a painting by Theodoor Rombouts

instrument. This clearly seems to be the case in the engraving *Zingend paar* [Singing Couple] by Schelte à Bolswert, after a painting by Theodoor Rombouts.

In accordance with the views stated above, it seems that lutes are usually depicted in a strictly realistic way, which enables us to follow the development of the instrument in the period on the basis of the representations. We also saw earlier that the context in which the lute appears is more or less realistic. We may therefore conclude that the nature of the companies in which it was played and the combination with other instruments is, in many cases, true to reality.

We will now focus on the important role of the lute as a symbolic object. Even more than in literature and in emblems, in paintings, the lute seems to be used to put across all kinds of messages, positive as well as negative.

To start with, the lute may represent music as a whole. Music was one of the seven liberal



Jan Sadeler I, after Maerten de Vos, *Musica*. Engraving, c.1590

arts, the Classical *artes liberales*, often depicted in the Renaissance in a series of engravings. When music is the subject, it was standard practice to show a choice of musical instruments, and very often the lute is the one that commands most attention because the person symbolising *Musica* plays that instrument.

In line with this, it is obvious that in the pictorial arts the lute could also symbolise the sense of hearing. In principle, any instrument could be used for this purpose, of course, but it is striking how often painters chose the lute. We see a clear allegory of the five senses in *Outdoor Party* by Dirck Hals, brother of the much more famous painter Frans Hals. Every 17th-century observer would have identified them at first sight: the lute-playing man and the woman sitting (perhaps she is singing?) next to him represent Hearing; the couple sitting down with the flower,



Dirck Hals, *Outdoor Party* (c.1620). Haarlem, Frans Halsmuseum

Smell; the standing cuddling couple, Feeling; the man with his binoculars and his lady friend; Sight; and the twosome on the right in the foreground with the chalice, Taste.

We must not forget that since Classical Antiquity, the senses had been seen largely in negative terms; they were thought to be deceptive, and in Christianity it is via the senses that Evil tries to take possession of man. The painting *Festive Company* by Isack Elyas is, according to Eddy de Jongh, an example of such a negative interpretation (Plate 19). The couple on the right is separate from the central company, whose various attributes seem to represent the five senses, although De Jongh has to admit that it is not quite clear who symbolises what. It is certain, though, that this company, in which the lute again takes pride of place, is giving itself over to worldly pleasures, against which it is warned by the two paintings in the background. One represents the Flood, with its unmistakable message: a sinful life leads man to destruction. The other is a rather obscure battle scene, which in this context may be taken to mean that life is a battle between Good and Evil, between mind and body, i.e. the senses.

Musical instruments often figure in still lifes as symbols of the concept of *Vanitas*, the transitoriness and vanity of human life and earthly matters. Music, after all, is typically a transient form of art: as soon as the sound has died away, the composition no longer exists. In such *Vanitas* still lifes musical instruments are often combined with other objects symbolising transience, such as skulls, soap bubbles, hourglasses, a globe, or powerful persons who have fallen low. The painter Edwaert Collier (c.1640–after 1706) specialised in such still lifes. On Plate 20 we see an example where music figures prominently, with a lute, a violin, a recorder and a music book.



On another Vanitas print, the engraving by Dirk Matham (p. 82), a lute and a cittern feature prominently. Another example heavy with meaning is the *Allegory on the Vices*, painted by Theodoor van Thulden (Plate 21). Apart from the standard Vanitas symbols – musical instruments, bubbles – there are other objects such as playing cards, a tobacco pipe, masks, tennis rackets and a dagger, all warnings against the games and light-heartedness to which human nature is prone. Again, the lute has been placed centre-stage.

Music, and therefore the lute, was also seen in a more positive light, of course. For instance, it was generally accepted that music was a strong medicine against melancholy. In the titles of many songbooks of the time there are references to the banishing of sorrow and sadness. So that, too, was one of the tasks of lute music. This is the sense in which we have to look at Hendrick Sorgh's *Lute Player* (Plate 22). We see a lutenist in an imaginary interior, one that would not have actually existed in the Netherlands in the 17th century. He accompanies himself while singing a song from a book lying on the table. The woman listening to him seems to be very attentive, but her position, with her hand supporting her head, also seems to express dejection. Her low spirits are exemplified by the painting over her head, in which we see the Classical loving couple, Pyramus and Thisbe. During the Renaissance, this story from the *Metamorphoses* by Ovid was a great favourite. It relates how two lovers are forbidden by their parents to communicate, with the result that they arrange a secret rendez-vous. At the appointed time the woman, Thisbe, arrives on the spot and is there confronted with a lion who had just killed an ox. She manages to escape the danger, but loses her veil, which is rent by the angry animal and is thus covered in blood. When Pyramus arrives a moment later he finds the veil and, believing that his beloved has been killed by the lion, commits suicide. Shortly afterwards he is found by Thisbe, who then also kills herself. This dramatic story probably symbolises the woman's melancholic mood and it is the lute's task to provide a counterweight.

We saw earlier that musical instruments and the lute in particular were associated with harmony. Music, of course, is the ultimate example of harmony, and the lute, with its many strings, contains the promise of harmonious music. The representation of music could symbolise different kinds of harmony. One of them is the harmony between the various arts. Theoreticians such as Karel van Mander have drawn parallels between the harmony of music on the one hand and composition in the pictorial arts on the other. There are many paintings of painters' studios with musical instruments in them that illustrate this concept. These are usually stringed instruments: violins, cellos, viols and lutes. A telling example of this theme is to be found in Jan van Swieten's portrait of a lute-playing painter (Plate 23). That this was an imagined representation is clear from the room in which the painting is set: in real life, no painter's studio would have been housed in such a room with pillars and round arches.

The lute is more commonly used to represent an existing or desired harmony between people. Especially widespread is the idea of the lute as a symbol of harmony in marriage and family life, a theme that was also very common in emblems. A wonderful example is the *Portrait of the Berchem family* by Frans Floris (Plate 24). A family is seated around a table with husband

and wife playing a virginal and a lute, positioned centrally in the composition. On the original frame of the painting, the theme is exemplified further: 'As there is nothing more fortunate in life than a harmonious marriage and a bed without strife, so there is nothing more pleasant than to see one's united descendants enjoy peace with a clear conscience. 1561'.

In view of the inscription on the frame the symbolic message of this group of portrait is beyond doubt, but at the same time, the people on it are not interchangeable figures, such as we often see in genre paintings, but individuals with their own physiognomy; these are portraits.

We see a similar combination of genre piece and group portrait on a painting by Jan Miense Molenaer, *Music-making company* (Plate 25). Here again a number of people with individual features is depicted, nearly all painted full-faced. It is assumed that the standing person in black with his hand on his chest is the artist himself, and that the others are his family members. Four of the people are playing an instrument (cittern, violin, lute and cello; to the left there is a virginal). In the middle is a young woman with a music book, beating the time with one hand. Undoubtedly this is another picture of familial harmony, something we can deduce from a number of details that stand for fidelity and love. We see, for instance, two hands intertwined and a burning heart with two arrows through it on the front of the virginal, and then there is the faithful dog at the feet of the cittern player. Of secondary importance are other virtues, such as moderation, symbolised by the woman beating time and the clock behind her. The clock could also be a symbol of transience, because there are many other Vanitas references on the painting: the boy blowing bubbles on the right, the man holding a portrait of his deceased wife, and on the top left, the portrait of a man whose hand rests on a skull.

Jan Steen's *The family concert* should be taken in the same spirit, be it in a more cheerful light than the formal picture by Molenaer (Plate 26). In Jan Steen's picture we recognise the painter's face in that of the lutenist, and his name is on the sheet of music paper in front of him. The others are probably his own family members. His wife Grietje van Goyen, daughter of the painter Jan van Goyen, sings and beats time, the eldest son plays the flute and the youngest the cello, although the latter handles a pipe instead of a bow. It is a jocular way of illustrating a Dutch proverb: like the elders sang, the young ones will pipe.

In the double portrait by Frans van Mieris of the Leiden professor of medicine François de Boë Sylvius and his wife, the lute that is being tuned by the woman (instructed by her learned spouse, perhaps?) must again be interpreted as a symbol of conjugal harmony (Plate 27).

But it is not always marital harmony that is portrayed in this manner; erotic love may also be at play. In poetry and in emblems, we saw many examples of string playing that served to arouse love. Lute playing was presented as a powerful aphrodisiac. These references to physical love are mostly to be understood, it seems, in a negative way, as a warning against the dangers involved. Lutes are therefore nearly always attributes of brothel interiors in Dutch paintings, for instance in *Brothel Scene* by Frans van Mieris the Elder (Plate 28). The bed linen above the door, the cuddling couple in the doorway, the dog – itself already a symbol of lust – in the course of mounting a bitch: everything points to how we should interpret the man and the woman in the foreground. Here, the lute on the wall is a symbolic token of sexual love.



The same negative erotic connotation turns up in *Lute player and singer* by Hendrick ter Brugghen (1628), a painting also known as *The duet* (Plate 29). This is not an ordinary couple making music, as the exotic dress illustrates. The woman's cleavage is prominently displayed and for the knowledgeable observer in the 17th century the feathers on her head were an equally obvious erotic indication. Depending on the context, feathers could have a clearly pejorative meaning and in combination with a woman they could point to indecency. We saw this attribute on the title page of Petrus Baardt's *Deugden-Spoor* (p. 180).

Once we are aware of the symbols, the references to sexuality and prostitution in Dutch painting occur much more frequently than one might think at first sight or deduce from the titles of the paintings, which are not necessarily contemporary. An example of such an ambiguity is the painting with the innocent title *The Return of the Hunters* by Pieter Codde (Plate 30). At first sight the title seems indeed to cover the content: hunters who return to a company of women with their catch. But on closer inspection, that idea is disturbed by many illogical elements: the people who apparently do not interact with each other but look straight at the observer, the strange room with bare walls, the bed in the corner. The 17th-century person looking at this painting would soon understand that we have to take the word *hunt* metaphorically as in a hunt for love. The men demonstratively show their catch, a hare and two partridges. In this way, they illustrate the phrases 'hunting the hare' and 'birding', both of which meant making love. In any case, partridges had a dubious erotic reputation; in Cesare Ripa's *Iconologia of Uytbeeldinghen des Verstants* [Iconology or the Representation of Intelligence], which appeared in a translation by Dirck Pers in Amsterdam in 1644, we read that nothing is as suitable for representing 'Immoderate Lust and Unbridled Lecherousness' as these birds, particularly *diewelcke wel dickwijls van sulcken rasernie, in 't by een komen, is aengehitst, en door soodaenige ongemanierde Geylheynt ontsieten, dat het Manneken dickwijls de eyren breeckt, die 't Wijffen broet* [those who, often, when they get together, get excited to a raging exultation and are beset by such rude lecherousness that the male breaks the eggs the female is hatching]. For those who got the message, Codde had painted a hardly disguised brothel scene. The erotic symbolism is stressed by the make-up, the jewellery and the trinkets of the three richly dressed women, and with the attributes that are also connected with physical love: a greyhound and the musical instruments, again with the lute featuring prominently.

The famous painting by Jan Steen, *A Woman at her Toilet*, also has erotic overtones (Plate 31). We see a richly attired woman with a wide-open bodice, putting on a stocking. The Dutch word for stocking, *kous*, was a synonym for the female pudenda, and in the 17th-century collocations with the word *kous* could be used as terms of abuse for women: *flep-kous*, *pis-kous*. Everything points to the fact that we are witnessing a post-coital scene in a brothel: the unmade bed on which a hunting dog is sleeping, the trinkets on the table, the shoes nonchalantly kicked off.

There is a striking still life in the foreground with a lute, a music book and a wreathed skull. They are characteristic elements of the Vanitas motif, a *memento mori*. The English lute maker and researcher David Van Edwards noticed that the lute in the painting lacks a number of strings; Steen deliberately painted the head of the instrument against a light background, and



Frans Huys, *Master Jan Slechthoofd*. Engraving, c.1550

left out some of the tuning pegs. The instrument must therefore be partly strung anew, something that strengthens the sexual explanation; we have seen how stretching the strings is used as a hardly disguised sexual metaphor.

The expression 're-stringing the lute' seems to have meant 'making love'. This is clearly pictured in a print made in Antwerp by Frans Huys, with a comment that explains what there is to be seen. In a room, Master Jan Slechthoofd [Jan Bad-Head] is tuning a lute. An old woman, Vrouw Langneuse [Mistress Long-Nose], has just come in with an unstrung lute that she wishes to have re-strung. In the doorway there is another old woman, also with an unstrung lute, clearly with the same wish. Jan refuses to comply with Mistress Long-Nose's request because he already has to fix the lute of his wife, Mistress Muilken, who is standing behind him.

If we are aware of the cliché of the restringing of the lute, we have to take the scene painted by Willem Duyster, *Man and woman with musical instruments*, less harmoniously than Eddy de Jongh did. In the couple with the instruments, he saw a representation of amorous harmony; only he was not sure whether the harmony already existed or still needed to be created. Since we see that the man, who is turned away from us, is not tuning a lute, as De Jongh thought, but restringing an instrument (the loose strings on the instrument are clearly visible), it does seem to be a case of sexual innuendo. The open lute case behind the woman should perhaps also be interpreted in this way; in the print about Master Jan Slechthoofd there is also such a



Willem Duyster, *Man and woman with musical instruments* (c.1630). Berlin, Jagdschloss Grunewald



Bartholomeus Dolendo, *The flautist*. Engraving, 1589-1626, after Lucas van Leyden, 1530



case. Now we look with different eyes at the young woman who faces the spectator with such an open, confident gaze.

The explicit erotic connotations of the lute meant that the instrument symbolised the female sex organs; for the same reason, the flute was the male counterpart. A sexual couple is almost openly mentioned in the legend to a print of a young man with a traverso by Bartholomeus Dolendo (1589–1626) after Lucas van Leyden. The couplet to the left says: *Wel lusti[c]h fluyterken, wilt mynen lust coelen. / Fluyt met u luytken, dat ickt mach voelen* [Well lusty flautist, please cool my lust; Flute together with your lute, so that I can feel it]. This can only be taken as an invitation to intercourse, with the word ‘lute’ standing for the woman.

The lute as the female sex organ is represented in a highly suggestive way in *The Procureess* by Gerard van Honthorst (Plate 32), in which a prostitute, recognisable by her plunging neckline and the feathers (like in Ter Brugghen’s painting), is watched by the procureess as she shows her lute to the customer. It cannot be coincidence that the shadows of her hand and the man’s already seem to be touching her instrument.

Right up to the 18th century, such banal connotations were common currency; witness a painting by Philip van Dijk (c.1725) called *Woman playing the Lute*, in which we see another feather-capped lady who seems to be showing us her lute, rather than playing it (Plate 33).

An astonishing example of a girl offering or showing the observer her lute is the painting *Girl with a Lute* by Judith Leyster (Plate 34). This time, the young woman does not catch our attention by feathers or scanty clothes, so there is nothing to suggest we are looking at a prostitute. It is not easy to give an interpretation of this picture, yet the high colour in her cheeks, the look in her eyes, and the dramatic use of light and dark lend the painting an unmistakably erotic air.

All in all, the lute occupies a special place in the world of allegorical symbols in paintings of the Dutch Golden Age. More than in poetry and in the literature of emblems, the instrument seems to be used in allusions to eroticism and sexuality. The medium itself, a purely visual, wordless language, probably inspired painters in this. The ambiguity made it possible for them to produce sensual, highly stimulating pictures – and thus commercially viable ones – without risking being accused of having pornographic or immoral motives; after all, such paintings were meant to offer a moral lesson and a warning against bad habits. The innumerable lutes in pictures of the Golden Age are, on closer inspection, not only a true representation of the role the instrument played in the musical and social world of the era, but also a powerful symbol in the visual language and the philosophy of the social and artistic elite of the Dutch Republic.

## CHAPTER 9

### Postlude: The Lute in the Dutch Republic, 1670-1800

Although the rich flourishing of lute music in the Dutch Republic seems to have come to an end after 1630, at least if we go by the publications of the work of famous composers, the instrument certainly did not disappear altogether. The lute remained one of the most represented instruments in paintings and people kept on playing it. We know this from the correspondence of Constantijn Huygens, who remained enamoured with the instrument right up to his death in 1687. Many lutenists figure in his letters, most of them foreign, professional musicians, but also some Dutch amateurs. In 1670 Huygens sent a few lute pieces to Johanne le Gillon, Lady of Beverning (The Hague), with a note saying that if they were too easy he could also supply more difficult pieces. He went on to say that he would be happy to come round and tell her how the pieces should be performed and what tempo they needed. In 1678 he corresponded with Ursula Philipotta van Raesveld, Lady of Amerongen (1643-1721), who lived in Utrecht, good-humouredly (and perhaps ambiguously?) joking that he didn't speak ill of her lute, just how it was strung. In 1680 he sent her a piece of music he had composed, presumably for the lute, with not too many notes; if she so wished, he would make a more embellished version for her.

It is striking that most amateur lutenists were women. Another correspondent, abroad this time, was Judith Killigrew, who in Huygens' eyes was a competent player of the lute, guitar and theorbo, thanks to the 'strength and accuracy of her hands'. She effortlessly played the more difficult pieces written by Gaultier, Dufaut and others, besides 'trifles' by Huygens. He did indeed send her some music, pieces for theorbo in 1671 for instance, and hoped to get pieces by the Frenchman Aymant in return, especially recent ones. Another lute-playing female was Mrs Seullin, or Anna Catharina Römer, of Hamburg, who is mentioned in a letter from 1680 addressed to a male amateur lutenist in Hamburg, Michael Döring, a medical doctor by profession.

We also continue to see lutes in paintings when people are portrayed with them – in a different context than that of the many anonymous lutenists in genre paintings. We have already



come across the double portrait by Frans van Mieris the Elder of the Leiden professor François de Boë Sylvius and his wife, the latter playing a lute.

But men too, played the lute. An outstanding example is Christiaan Huygens (1629-1695), the world-famous mathematician, physicist and astrologist, one of the leading scientists of his time. Like his father Constantijn, he received a top-class education in which music played a major part. The young Christiaan had viola da gamba lessons and later also harpsichord lessons from Steven van Eyck, and lute lessons from Jeronimus van Someren, who had also taught his father the rudiments of playing the instrument. It looks, however, as if once he had grown up, and after his student years, Christiaan neglected the lute in favour of the harpsichord. He used the latter instrument for his musicological research and for his experiments with a new kind of music notation. In 1656 he sent the musician Henri Dumont from the Southern Netherlands, who was then working in Paris, a courante by Jacques Gaultier, transcribed for harpsichord by Constantijn Huygens in a form of music notation that he had invented. The innovation was that in a group of notes with the same note values, only the duration of the first one was indicated, as in lute tablature, so that the players had to reconstruct themselves the duration of the separate notes and the way they were connected.

It seems as if by the end of the 17th century, the lute had been gradually edged into a marginal position in the musical life of the Dutch Republic. In France, too, the great cultural example, the instrument had rapidly made way for the more fashionable guitar. Only in the German countries and in Austria did the lute enjoy great popularity for another half-century, both in the hands of amateurs and in those of eminent lutenists.

The reduced interest in the lute around 1700 is obvious from a theoretical work by Klaas Douwes, organist and school teacher in the Frisian village of Tzum, called *Grondig ondersoek van de toonen der musijk* [Thorough investigation into the notes of music], which he published in Leeuwarden in 1699. Douwes explains the principles of music, and in the second part of the book he gives a short description of different musical instruments. Obviously he starts with the organ, to which he allots twenty pages, but subsequent instruments are given a great deal less space; each one has to make do with two or three pages, to a minimum of half a page. The author gives a short description of each instrument and explains how it is played. In turn, he discusses the harpsichord, viola da gamba and violin, recorder, traverso, shawm, oboe, cornet (cornetto, zink), trumpet, tromba marina (a kind of long violin with only one string) and the *noordse balk* (a zither-like stringed instrument). That was all, as far as he was concerned; for Douwes, the lute was an instrument of no importance.

Yet around 1700, the lute was still played in the Dutch Republic (Plate 35). In December 1706 three people arrived in Utrecht: the sixteen-year-old William Henry Osborne (1690-1711), who had been Lord Danby since 1694, his younger brother by three years, Peregrine Hyde Osborne, and their tutor, one Louis Bérard. In long letters to their grandfather on the boys' education, Louis Bérard reported on all kinds of daily matters, and especially on their finances. We also

find a great deal of information about things musical in this correspondence. It tells us that the boys had daily music lessons, that music and strings were bought, instruments and instrument cases to go with them, and even two music stands. The young Lord Danby applied himself to the lute and was clearly making good progress; his brother was learning to play the bass viol and the recorder. There are several mentions of musical evenings with other music lovers, their teachers and professional musicians. In the end there were even weekly concerts to which eminent guests were invited, while others had to pay an entrance fee to cover the costs. In 1710 the trio left for Germany, to Hannover and Hamburg, among other places. The music lessons continued and Lord Danby bought himself a very expensive lute. In July 1711 they were back in Utrecht and planning a journey to Antwerp and Brussels. But in August the young Lord unexpectedly contracted smallpox, of which he died after a short illness.

In Utrecht, then, there were still facilities to play the lute at this time; people could take lessons and instruments, strings and music could be bought. The Sibley Library of the Eastman School of Music in Rochester (New York) is in possession of 'Lord Danby's Lute Book', a manuscript belonging to the young lutenist, in which two experienced hands, one of them possibly Danby's lute teacher's, wrote down a large number of pieces. There are indications – for instance, the presence of adaptations of Georg Friedrich Handel's music – that a large part of the music could stem from the years in Germany, 1710 to 1711, but some of it may also date from their Utrecht period.

Music for lute was still available in the shops. In a catalogue of music books printed by the publisher Estienne Roger of Amsterdam, which can be dated to 1701 or shortly beforehand, there is only one single lute book: *Suittes pour le lut avec un violon ou une flûte et une basse cont. ad libitum, de la composition de Mrs. du Fau, l'Enclos, Pinel, Lulli, Bruinings, le Fevre et autres habiles Maistres, gravé, f. 4.-*; clearly a book, then, with French music for lute with a melody instrument and, if so desired, a bowed bass or a theorbo. The preceding item in the catalogue is a book for guitar that obviously has the same structure: *Un livre de pieces de Guitarre avec 2 dessus d'instrumens & une basse cont. ad libitum, de la composées par Mr. Nicolas Derosiers, gr(avé), f. 9.-. Le même livre de Guitarre séparé, gravé f. 5.-*. Elsewhere the same Mr. Derosiers published *Les principes de la Guitarre*, clearly a guitar method.

Nicolas Derosiers (c.1643-after 1703) from Châlons was a French guitarist, composer and music publisher who had come to the Dutch Republic and put a number of works on the market. In 1667 he became an Amsterdam citizen under the name 'Nicolas Martin de la Vigne des Rosiers'. In 1668, then 25 years old, he married Anne Pointel, sister of the musician, composer, music printer and instrument maker Antoine Pointel, also resident in Amsterdam. Together, Derosiers and Pointel published a number of music books between 1687 and 1691, with works by Corelli and French composers such as Lully, de Visée and Derosiers himself. Derosiers also played the viol and the theorbo, as is evident from a dispute he had in 1692 with another musician, one Gregorio Berti. At the request of Derosiers, the violin maker Willem van der Zijden and 'Anton' Pointel, resident in Amsterdam, made a statement on 20 May of that year, concern-

ing two viols of striped plum wood, made by Jan Boumeester, and a theorbo with three rosettes in the belly, including the accompanying case that had recently been made by Mauris Wiltshut, instrument case maker in Pieter Jacobsstraat. These instruments were then in the hands of Gregorio Berti, living in Kalverstraat. However, they were the property of Derosiers; he had lent the instruments three months earlier to one Claude Gillis, who had since gone bankrupt and had left for an unknown destination. Berti did not take this lying down, because the day after he asked Francisco Como, also living in Amsterdam, to make a statement that he had heard more than once that Gillis, who was then sharing a house with Berti, had bought the three instruments from Derosiers for f. 100. Henrij de Saumarez stated that he had had music lessons from Gillis and that he had heard more than once that the two viols had been sold for f. 60 (from which it would follow that the theorbo cost f. 40). How the dispute was solved is not mentioned in the records.



‘The Musician’, from: Jan and Caspar Luyken, *Spiegel van het menselyk bedryf* (Amsterdam 1694)

In spite of the reduced popularity of the lute in musical practice, the instrument still played a role in literature and the visual arts, where it remained a symbol of abstract concepts. When Jan and Caspar Luyken brought out their *Spiegel van het menselyk bedryf* [Mirror of people's occupations] in 1694, Music was still represented in the person of a lute player.

In 1709, Jan Baptist Wellekens (1658-1726) published a poem entitled *Endenhout*, about the country seat of the same name outside Heemstede, property of the Amsterdam merchant Jan Muysen. In the poem Wellekens mentions the friendship between Jan's son Gerard Muysen and the writer and historiographer Pieter Vlaming (1686-1734), also from Amsterdam, calling them by two shepherds' names: Dorilas for Gerard and Amintas for Pieter. He wrote:

[...]	
Amintas die, zo wel in 's lands	<i>Amintas, who, well-versed in the history of</i>
kronyk ervaaren,	<i>the land,</i>
Het aangenaam en nut op zyne luit	<i>Combines usefulness with pleasure on his</i>
kan paaren;	<i>lute;</i>
De braave Amintas die zyn hart, zyn	<i>The excellent Amintas, who pledged his</i>
zang en vlyt	<i>heart, his song and industry</i>
Aan braaven Dorilas, zyn halsvriend,	<i>To the excellent Dorilas, his bosom friend;</i>
heeft gewyd;	
[...]	

In this text the lute seems to have been used metaphorically, to symbolise the fact that Vlaming was a writer. Around 1700, the instrument was still known as a metaphor for poetry-writing.

The lute was to retain this function as a symbol of poetry and music till the 19th century. In the Romantic era, too, a poet needed a lute to express his innermost feelings. Take, for instance, the following lines in Wilhelm Müller's poetry cycle *Die schöne Müllerin* (1817), set to music by Schubert:

Meine Laute hab ich gehängt an die	<i>My lute I have hung on the wall,</i>
Wand,	
Hab sie umschlungen mit einem	<i>And wrapped a green ribbon round her;</i>
grünen Band;	
Ich kann nicht mehr singen, mein	<i>I can no longer sing, my heart is</i>
Herz ist zu voll	<i>overflowing</i>
[...]	<i>[...]</i>

Although around 1700 the lute no longer occupied the important place of days gone by, it was still played, be it on a smaller scale than in the first half of the 17th century. One famous person



Cornelis Troost, *Portrait of Pieter Vlaming*. Mezzotint and engraving. Private collection



known to be devoted to playing the lute was Herman Boerhaave (1669-1738), the internationally celebrated doctor and scientist (Plate 36). During his student years in Leiden, around 1695, he studied music theory with a private teacher, Lothar Zumbach, and took lute lessons from Jacob Kremberg, a Polish lutenist who had made his home in Leiden. Kremberg (1650-1718) had been born in Warsaw, had studied in Leipzig and had subsequently worked at several princely courts. He had been a lutenist at the Swedish court. In 1689 he had published a songbook in Dresden called *Musicalische Gemüths-Ergötzung, oder Arien...* [Musical Delight of the Soul, or Songs ...] in which the songs are accompanied by a figured bass as well as tablatures for lute, guitar, angelica and viola da gamba. Kremberg had since been director of the prestigious Hamburg opera, but that had not been a great success; he had had to do a moonlight flit to escape from his creditors. In the Dutch Republic, however, he went back to the same profession, because in 1696 he was described as 'director of the opera at Leiden'. This was on the occasion of the baptism of his daughter by his wife Dorothea Sophia Straussen.

In his student years, Boerhaave made friends with another student with a passion for music, the Scot John Clerk. The latter even wrote music to texts that Boerhaave had specially written for the purpose. Boerhaave remained a passionate lute player all his life, mainly as a diversion from his demanding scientific work. He was said to be a very competent player of various instruments, but he excelled on the lute, sometimes accompanying his own singing. After his death, the estate was sold and there were two lutes among it.

Lutes were also considered collectables. One such collector of musical objects was the bookseller Nicolas Selhof of The Hague. After his death in 1759, a catalogue was printed of the music books and musical instruments that he had left behind. It contained no fewer than 171(!) instruments, including a large contingent of stringed instruments from builders with resounding names such as Amati and Stainer, and all other instruments imaginable, often in different versions. This music lover possessed just one lute, no. 70 on the list, and that was a very special one: 'Un Luth a 13 Cordes, de Ulrich Dieffenprugkher in Venezia, *construit d'Ivoire*'. A lute then, with ivory ribs, built by the German lute maker Ulrich Tieffenbrucker, who worked in Venice and was active in the first half of the 16th century. That this lute was still in playable condition is proved by the number of strings: the instrument had been adapted to the then modern fashion of a thirteen-course lute, which had arisen in Germany around 1725. Selhof would not have played the instrument himself because in his music library, also recorded, and which covers 2,945 titles including manuscripts, the only piece of lute music was that by the French lutenist Charles Mouton. He also possessed two guitar books, by Corbetta and De Visée, and *Der Cytheren Lusthof* by Michiel Vredeman (nos. 609-613); furthermore, compositions by Saint-Luc for lute with violin and bass *ad libitum* and *Forty Select Duets, Ariettas & Minuets for two Guitars, Mandelins or Cittars, by the best Masters* (nos. 743-745).

That the lute had not quite disappeared from 18th-century concert halls is apparent from the activities of Pieter Albert van Hagen in Rotterdam. In 1731, a concert by this young German lutenist and violinist created a veritable sensation in that city. The poet Frans de Haes devoted a



lyrical outpouring to the performance and could not praise the well-nigh supernatural qualities of this musician highly enough.

In 1731 Frans de Haes wrote an interminable poem *Op de luit- en vedelkunst van den heer Petrus Albertus van Hagen* [On art of the lute and fiddle of Mr Petrus Albertus van Hagen], of which we give a few excerpts:

Met welk geluid word best geüit	<i>What sound expresses best</i>
Het zielverrukkende geluid	<i>The soul enchanting tones</i>
Van uwe Luit- en Vedelsnaren,	<i>Of your lute and viol strings,</i>
Waerdoor gy, laetst, zoo wonderbaer,	<i>With which you lately, so miraculously,</i>
ô Hoogverlichte Kunstenaer,	<i>O most renowned artist,</i>
Myn geest ten ligchaem uit deedt	<i>Made my soul depart from my body?</i>
varen?	

Ja 't scheen, op dien gewyden stond,	<i>Yes, it was as if, in that holy hour,</i>
Van Hagen, dat ik my bevond	<i>Van Hagen, I found myself</i>
Ver boven Maen- en Zonnekringen.	<i>Far above the course of sun and moon.</i>
My dacht, ik was in 't Geestenryk	<i>I seemed to be in the realm of the dead</i>
En hoorde 't Hemelsch Harpmuzyk	<i>And to hear the heavenly harps</i>
Der vierentwintig Ouderlingen.	<i>Of the Four-and-twenty Elders.</i>

[...]

ô Zuivre Weelde! ô zielsonthael!	<i>O happiness pure, o rapture of the soul,</i>
Vergeef ons, dat onze aerdsche tael,	<i>Forgive us that our worldly language</i>
Uw Hemelsch zoet niet kan	<i>Cannot express your heavenly sweetness,</i>
ontvouwen,	
Waer meê gy God en mensch	<i>With which you gladden God and man.</i>
verheugt.	
Wel zalig hy, die, in uw vreugd',	<i>Blesséd him who in your rapture</i>
Zyn Tabernakelen mag bouwen!	<i>May build his tabernacles.</i>

Wie, ô van Hagen, die den geest	<i>Who, O Van Hagen, treats our souls</i>
Onthaelt op zulk een Hemelsch feest,	<i>To such celestial felicity,</i>
Wie kan uw kunst naer eisch	<i>Who can adequately thank your art?</i>
bedanken?	

Corellies geest, zyn rustplaets' uit	<i>The spirit of Corelli, lured from</i>
Gelokt, komt luistren naer uw Luit,	<i>Its grave, comes to listen to your lute,</i>
En huppelt, op uw Vedelklanken.	<i>And dances to the sound of your violin.</i>

[...]

Geluk dan, ô myn Vaderstad,	<i>I wish you joy then, O my father-town,</i>
Geluk met zulken nieuwen schatt'.	<i>Joy with such a treasure new.</i>
Ontfang Hem als uw' Ingeboren;	<i>Receive him as if he was a native here.</i>
Geluk met eenen Kunstenaar',	<i>Congratulations on an artist</i>
Wiens weergaê gy, in honderd jaer,	<i>Whose parallel in a hundred years</i>
Niet hebt gehoord, of ligt zult	<i>You have not heard, nor are likely to hear.</i>
hooren.	

[...]

Frans de Haes, *Het verheerlykte en vernederde Portugal* (Amsterdam 1758), pp. 166-170

Petrus (Pieter) Albertus van Hagen was born in Königsutter around 1714. When he gave that stunning performance in Rotterdam in 1731, he cannot have been more than 17 or so. We do not know how Rotterdam managed to attract this talented musician, but it is possible that the wealthy merchant and former mayor Cornets de Groot played a part in it. It is unlikely that Van Hagen immediately settled in Rotterdam in 1731. We know that he studied the violin with Francesco Geminiani, who was staying in London in 1731; Van Hagen may have travelled through Rotterdam on that occasion. Only in 1741 can he be proved to have been in Rotterdam again, since he and his wife Maria Sophia Salfelt were witnesses at a baptism. In the same year he was appointed organist in the Oosterkerk; later, in 1764, he was to become the organist of the St Laurenskerk. His first wife died in 1750. He remarried in 1753; with his second wife, Catharina Logen from Geilenkirchen, he had three children.

By then, Hagen had acquired a new function. At the expense of the aforementioned De Groot, a concert hall with accommodation above it had been opened in Bierstraat, where, from 1756 onwards, Hagen organised Saturday concerts. From the announcements in the *Rotterdamse Courant* we know many of the programmes. On 16 February 1760, for instance, his six-year-old daughter Elizabeth was the soloist in a violin concerto by Tartini. More important with respect to the lute is the series of concerts given by his younger brother Bernhard Joachim Hagen, a respected lutenist, violinist and composer, who was then in the service of the Margrave of Bayreuth. Bernhard played the lute on 22 November 1760, and again on 29 November 1760 (a concerto and a trio). On 3 January 1761 he played lute music and a violin concerto, while both brothers could be heard on 28 February in a Trio on Two Lutes. Bernhard's last performance was on 14 March, when he played on the *Luyt, Viool en Callicioncino*.

In 1772 the English music historian Charles Burney went on a study tour through Europe and also visited Rotterdam. From time to time Burney could be highly critical in his travel report, but for Van Hagen and his children, he had nothing but praise. However, he could not restrain himself from making a sarcastic remark about the level of the cultural life in the city:

Van Hagen, a German, who is the principal organist here, is likewise an excellent performer on the violin, of which he convinced me by playing one of his own solos. He was a scholar of Geminiani, and he not only plays, but writes very much in the style of that great master of harmony. His daughter has a fine voice, and sings with much taste and expression. His son has been under M. Honaür, in Paris. Except these particulars, the only discovery which I was able to make, relative to music, in this large and populous city, was, that it contained nothing more to be discovered: but this negative kind of knowledge is not without its use, as it assuages curiosity, and precludes all self-reproach on the score of negligence.

Petrus Albertus van Hagen died on 12 September 1777, and with him, perhaps, the last professional lutenist in the Netherlands, at least before the revival of Early Music in our times.

The lute remained in use in the second half of the 18th century, more particularly in what is now Germany and Austria. The best-known exponent of the instrument was then Karl Kohaut (1726–1784), a colleague of Haydn's; they both wrote music for the lute, particularly chamber music for smaller ensembles. But these were truly the last exploits of what had once been the queen of musical instruments. In 1802, Heinrich Christoph Koch still included the lute in his *Musikalisches Lexikon*, but he had to come to the conclusion that this once 'so cherished instrument, that was counted among the most pleasant of all stringed instruments, seems to have been sinking into oblivion for some time'.

In the Dutch Republic the lute was held in perhaps even lower esteem than in Germany. But it was not forgotten altogether. Possibly the last sign of life is to be found in a musical dictionary that was published in Amsterdam in 1795, called *Muzijkaal Kunst-woordenboek, behelzende de verklaringen, als mede het gebruik en de kracht der kunstwoorden, die in de muzijk voorkomen* [Technical dictionary of Music, containing the explanations as well as the uses and the power of the technical words that occur in music]. This reference work was written by Joos Verschuere Reynvaan. He was born in Middelburg in 1739, and in 1765 obtained a doctorate in both branches of law, civil and canon, at the University of Harderwijk. He then settled as a defence lawyer in Middelburg. In 1769 he moved to Flushing, where he had been appointed town carillonneur and town organist and where he played on the new organ in the main church. At the same time he kept working at the Bar, and was a member of the Freemasons lodge. His real passion, however, was music. In Flushing he gave academic lectures on musicology, he played the violin and composed six sonatas for this instrument and piano; he also published *De CL Psalmen, met de Lofzangen, volgens de nieuwste Dichtmaat, als bevallige Aria's, in den Italiaanschen smaak, op nieuw geinventeerde Muzyk gebragt* [The 150 psalms and hymns according to the latest poetic laws, as well as elegant Arias in the Italian style, set to new invented Music]. He died in 1809.

His *Kunst-woordenboek*, the dictionary, is an encyclopaedic work about music at the end of the 18th century. Reynvaan pays ample attention to the lute and provides a large fold-out picture of a lute with a schematic, expert explanation of the tuning of lutes and the system of

lute tablature. It shows that he considered the standard lute tuning to be that in the *D-minor* Baroque tuning, with thirteen courses, the lowest of which is in A. What is so remarkable is that the author in his description does not seem to be referring to something from the past, but rather to an obviously very much alive and still frequently played instrument. He is clearly aware of the past: he points out that the lute used to have fewer strings, and that gradually more and more were added until they had the number they now have; the use of the word 'now' indicates that he is talking about an actual state of affairs. Reynvaan distinguishes, possibly on the basis of early publications, seven different types of lute according to size: 'the small octave lute; the small descant lute; the descant lute; the alto lute; the tenor lute, the bass lute and the large octave bass lute', which all had more or fewer strings depending on their tuning – he probably meant that the smaller lutes had fewer strings than the larger ones. 'Furthermore it is worth mentioning that the lute is usually strung with gut strings.'

Most of the space allotted to the lute is taken up by a convoluted discussion of lute tuning and the system of tablature, but at the end of the entry we get a short but surprisingly accurate description of the playing posture and the technique for both left and right hand. It is worth quoting this in full:

As to the manner of playing, one should press the lute with the right hand to the chest, a little more to the left side than to the right, and rest it lightly on the right thigh. Furthermore the thumb of the left hand should always be placed in the middle of the back of the neck, while the hand is rounded and the arm somewhat pressed against the body, but in a relaxed posture; the fingers move across the fingerboard while spread. The right hand, too, should be rounded, the fingers bent and spread to pluck the strings more easily; the thumb should always remain stretched to pluck the bass strings easily.

The right place to pluck the strings so that they produce a sufficiently powerful tone is in the middle, between the rose and the bridge, because there the attack has the greatest effect. The higher along the fingerboard one plucks the strings with the right hand, the softer and weaker the tone.

This brief but precise description of the technique of lute playing can only have come from the pen of one who was intimately familiar with the instrument. It is, of course, also possible that Reynvaan copied this from another, older treatise, although this has not been identified until now. All in all, however, the text gives the impression that the lute was a still existing instrument for Reynvaan. Whether he himself played the lute remains an unanswered question, but it is possible that he knew someone who did. It looks as if around 1790, lute music was still heard in Flushing. In the Netherlands, it would have been the instrument's swan song.



## SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

The musical culture in the Dutch Golden Age (c.1580-1670) was, in the absence of large, institutional patrons such as churches and courts, a predominantly urban, middle-class phenomenon. The people who made music and employed professional musicians as performers, music teachers or composers were mainly the rulers and burghers of a town or city. The musical culture was a highly lively one: rich and poor, young and old, sang the folk tunes everybody knew and the thousands of songs that were current in published form. Many people played an instrument and the lute was a familiar object, especially in higher circles.

The popularity of the lute is immediately obvious from the frequent appearance of the instrument in Dutch paintings. Innumerable genre paintings show people who are making music, and the instrument most commonly depicted is the lute. It is usually realistically rendered, both as far as its outward appearance and the musical context are concerned. We see lutenists as solo musicians, as the accompanists of singers, and playing in ensembles; there, the lute will often have been an accompanying *basso continuo* instrument.

Dutch paintings of that era were often symbolic in intent and contained a somewhat disguised message, such as a moral lesson or a warning. In that visual symbolism the lute could play different roles, so divergent that they could, in fact, be mutually exclusive. The lute could stand for the sense of hearing, for music and hence for harmony, both in society and in love, particularly in marriage. On the other hand, the lute as a musical instrument could also be a symbol of transience and human vanity. Music was supposed to have a wholesome effect on melancholy and was furthermore considered a powerful means to arouse love. As such the lute was associated with the love between man and woman, in a positive but also in a negative sense: it often symbolised purely physical love, combining all the negative connotations of lust, illicit love and adultery. In the frequent brothel scenes the lute is hardly ever lacking; it is either played or hanging on the wall. Following this, finally, the lute symbolised the female sex and the female sex organ in particular.



In literature, too, the lute was a gratefully used symbol. Since it was associated with the lyre on which the poets of Classical Antiquity accompanied themselves, it was generally meant to symbolise the art of poetry. But in analogy with the negative associations in the visual arts, the lute could also stand for licentiousness and idleness. And Constantijn Huygens had a way of using the instrument as a metaphor in descriptions of various down-to-earth matters, from his own infirmity to the ignorance of lawyers and the garrulousness of women.

Middle-class musical culture offered musicians fewer professional opportunities in the Dutch Republic than in other countries. In the Netherlands there were no secure jobs in orchestras at a court or in a church, and only later in the 17th century did public concert halls where operas and concerts were performed make an appearance in this country. The only musicians with a permanent appointment were the town players, in practice often playing the organ and wind instruments. Yet, there were also some lutenists among them, such as Willem Corneliszoon van Duivenbode and John Jordan in Leiden, Jeronimus Torel in Amsterdam, and Theodoor Berry in Utrecht. However, in their civic function they may have been playing wind instruments. All in all, the musical culture of the Dutch Republic must have had something to offer, since many musicians, including lutenists, moved to the Netherlands from abroad in the course of the 17th century.

If the lutenists of the 16th century, so far as we are acquainted with them, were of Dutch origin, in the Golden Age they often came from abroad. This is true, in any case, for the more important ones: Joachim van den Hove, Nicolaes Vallet and also Johannes Fresneau, people whose music has survived in some abundance. But foreigners were also by far in the majority among lesser-known lutenists: think of Jeronimus Torel, Johannes Belloni, Richard Hancock and Albertus Girard in Amsterdam, Franciscus Melem and Theodoor Berry in Utrecht, Joris Beemont in Alkmaar, and John Jordan, Dudley Rosseter and possibly also Thomas Reset (Rosseter?) in Leiden. They were, as far as we know, from France, the Southern Netherlands and England. Apparently these foreigners preferred settling in Amsterdam, and Leiden, too, was a town they favoured. From some of them, we know, or it can be assumed, that they partly chose to leave their mother country for religious reasons. Others may have settled in the Dutch Republic for purely professional reasons; Johannes Fresneau was a Roman Catholic who exchanged Catholic France for Protestant Holland.

Among lute builders and other makers of stringed instruments, the same picture emerges. In historical sources they are mentioned from about 1580 onwards and at that time they were usually of foreign descent. They were often born just across the border, in Antwerp or in the German regions along the eastern borders of the Republic; the prominent Leiden lute builder Andries Asseling, however, came from the much more distant Pomerania. There must have been a large number of stringed-instrument makers; in Amsterdam alone we know of dozens in the first half of the 17th century. Over time the number of those born in the Netherlands increased a little, most of them living in Amsterdam, The Hague or Leiden.

These craftsmen were variously described as 'lute maker', 'instrument maker' or 'cittern

maker'; in Amsterdam the latter description was often used. From this, and from the occasional workshop inventory, we know that they were not specialised in one type of instrument, but that they built all kinds of bowed and plucked stringed instruments, certainly also lutes. After the middle of the 17th century they were more regularly called 'violin maker', possibly an indication that bowed instruments had begun to form the core of their output, and that plucked instruments such as lutes and citterns were gradually coming to be less important.

In Amsterdam these instrument makers all tended to live in the area around the Oude Kerk, close to their wealthy customers. The profession was passed on from father to son, and marriages sometimes took place within the occupational group. Some instrument makers emerge from the sources as well-to-do burghers who owned a house, or even more than one; their enterprises, at least, seem to have prospered. Yet, in view of the large number of builders, the rivalry within the profession must have been considerable. Some of them had to supplement their income with additional jobs; it was not unusual to combine making lutes with being an innkeeper. Others eventually had to choose a different line of work. Apart from building new instruments and repairing others, these craftsmen were also active as traders in strings and second-hand instruments.

How did professional lutenists in the Dutch Republic earn a living? Several roads were open to them, which they will have taken either alternatively or in combination. To begin with there were large groups of wealthy people who could be given music lessons; the young children of burghers or, in Leiden, the international student population. This was probably a not insignificant source of income, because documentary evidence shows that teachers would often turn up every day for a number of months or even years.

Then there was the playing at official banquets of the city fathers, for private people at weddings, parties, and aubades or serenades. No festive gathering was complete without music, and the professional lives of Van den Hove, and more particularly Vallet, show that there was a great deal of employment in this line of work. It also included playing at dance schools; Nicolaes Vallet even set up his own dance school, for which he engaged fellow musicians. Making music at weddings and dances, however, was frowned upon by the more orthodox part of the nation, so that musicians playing at such occasions faced social resistance, and in the case of a dance school, with restrictive measures by the local authorities.

We know that a few lutenists had additional income from other activities. The Rosseters (Philip, James and possibly Thomas, too) were also, or maybe even primarily, makers of musical instruments. The combination of instrument builder and musician we also see in Hendrik Aseling (violinist) and Michiel Vredeman (cittern player). It is also possible that Johannes Fresneau dealt in second-hand lutes. Apart from the Utrecht-based Vredeman, they were all active in Leiden, and that may not be just a coincidence. Since there were fewer instrument makers in Leiden than in Amsterdam, there was possibly more of a niche for musicians to earn an extra penny that way.

Finally, musicians could try to generate an income by publishing music, their own work

as well as that of others. Van den Hove and Vallet both published a series of lute books, the latter even using the new – and expensive – procedure of copper engraving. It seems that these projects were hardly successful financially, but the publications do show that their authors were artistically and commercially the most ambitious lutenists of the Dutch Golden Age. As such, their lute books have made them famous, also among future generations; Joachim van den Hove and Nicolaes Vallet are the major names in our story. The third lutenist with a production worth mentioning was Johannes Fresneau, but as far as we know he never published anything. In his case, that was also the result of the spirit of the time: in the first two decades of the 17th century, publications of lute music were frequent; in the third quarter of the century, they were highly exceptional.

Apart from the books by Van den Hove and Vallet, two more volumes with lute music were published in the Dutch Republic: the book by the German Daniel Laelius in 1617, and the *Nederlandsche Gedenck-clanck* of Adriaen Valerius in 1626. The latter work was, one could say, more like a history book with songs, but it does contain a great deal of printed lute music. It marked the end of a remarkable sequence that had started in 1601 with Van den Hove's *Florida*. This series of lute books had its counterpart in similar volumes that appeared in other countries in the first two decades of the century, but it is still a striking phenomenon, the more so because in the Dutch Republic during that period, music printing was hardly a prominent line of business; apart from the lute music, all we see is a number of volumes of vocal music and a large contingent of songbooks. These books with lute music give a clear indication of how important the lute was in Dutch musical life at the time. After this period of flourishing, the stream of lute music publications ran dry, as it did elsewhere in Europe. When, at the end of the 17th century, music publishing in the Netherlands became a fully grown business, times had changed. No longer was music for lute solo published; books and methods for guitar by the Amsterdam Frenchman Nicolas Derosiers took its place.

Lute music was not only widely distributed in printed books, but it also circulated in manuscript form. This will have been true for the whole of the period, but our knowledge of it is restricted by the fact that few such manuscripts have survived. A distressing example is the loss of the 200 music manuscripts that disappeared from the estate of Constantijn Huygens; there were at least three among them with his own lute compositions. Sheer luck has ensured that at least a few valuable manuscript books were saved: from the beginning of the 17th century, the Thysius Lute Book (started by Adriaen Smout in 1595 and kept up by him right into the 1630s); the autograph by Joachim van den Hove (1614–1615); and from between 1660 and 1670, the Goëss manuscripts, once owned by the Utrecht magistrate Johan van Reede. There were several types of lute manuscripts: private collections of semi-aristocrats from the highest civil servant circles of the Dutch Republic (Van Reede and Huygens), student manuscripts that were continued later in life (Smout), and the manuscripts of professional lutenists, partly intended as complementary copies for a benefactor, partly functioning as a musical sketchbook (Van den Hove).

The contents of these manuscripts are therefore widely divergent. As a student, Smout

collected the songs and dances from France, England, Italy and the Netherlands that circulated mostly anonymously, whereas later in life he was more interested in sacred music. He adapted some of this for the lute himself. In the Van den Hove manuscript, we find to some extent the same international repertoire, often of a higher musical standard than in Smout's book, and also elaborate compositions of his own. Van Reede collected the art music of his days, almost exclusively the work of French lutenists who moved in aristocratic circles; fortunately he also included some work by the Leiden lutenist Johannes Fresneau. The manuscripts owned by Constantijn Huygens were probably filled with a repertoire comparable to that in the books of Van Reede; but as we just saw, he also had three volumes with compositions of his own. It was characteristic of the social high positions of Van Reede and Huygens that they left some of the copying chores to assistants. Smout and Van den Hove did all of the copying themselves.

To go by the innumerable lutes in paintings, the instrument was popular until far into the 17th century, although in the last quarter of the century there was a noticeable decline. That phenomenon possibly followed the actual situation with some sort of delay; as far as the lute in the Dutch Republic is concerned, things were going downhill from the 1620s, if we go by the production of new compositions. It is probably not without reason that the two volumes with instrumental music published by Vallet in the 1640s were intended for a melody instrument and thorough bass; that was apparently more profitable than lute music. We know that other lutenists of the period entered into the town's service as town players and, as we saw, cittern makers increasingly started to call themselves violin makers. Yet the decline of the lute was probably a very gradual process; in the 1640s the French lutenist Johannes Fresneau clearly felt it worthwhile moving to the Dutch Republic to try his luck there, and he managed to keep practising his profession until his death in 1670.

From the middle of the century onwards, the lute was being replaced by the new instrument of fashion: the guitar. Huygens, too, succumbed, and after 1672 he played on the 'bastard lute', and even started composing music for this 'miserable' instrument. After around 1670 we find professional guitar players in the sources, such as Jeronimus Reijnwalt and Nicolas Derosiers in Amsterdam. Instrument makers also sold guitars, and in The Hague Jean de la Grange called himself 'guitar maker'.

What is the reason for this change in musical taste? On the one hand, we must look for the reason in the greater ease in handling a guitar: a more manageable instrument, with far fewer strings than the lute – the never-ending tuning of the large number of unstable gut strings was a typical disadvantage of the lute. On top of that, the guitar was easier to play, and the music written for it was lighter and more accessible in nature than lute music. In the second half of the 17th century the repertoire for lute was entirely French in style and had acquired an elitist and aristocratic aura. By then, the lute may have lost contact with the mainstream music scene.

Yet there were people who continued to play the lute; many women, but also men, like Boerhaave. It was still possible to acquire a lute in the Dutch Republic, to buy or copy lute music and to have lessons from a teacher. This is proved by the presence of Jacob Kremberg in Leiden in

the 1690s, and the musical activities of the young Lord Danby in Utrecht in the following decade. In the middle of the 18th century, lutenists were still programmed in concert halls, but one gets the impression that they were a sensation partly because the audience was no longer familiar with the instrument. At the very end of the 18th century the Flushing lawyer, Freemason, musician and publicist Joos Verschuere Reynvaan was probably one of the last Dutchmen who was still familiar with the lute.

All in all, the lute culture of the Golden Age turns out to be far richer than was previously assumed. Apart from the well-known lutenists Joachim van den Hove and Nicolaes Vallet, we have found a host of lutenists who devoted themselves professionally to the art. They all lived in the towns, in the vicinity of the most important clients: well-to-do burghers who required their services as lute teachers and as musicians at festivities. The many craftsmen who made lutes and repaired them also settled in these areas; in addition, there was a trade in foreign instruments. Van den Hove and Vallet published lute music of international quality, and later it was Johannes Fresneau who became a match for his French colleagues. Apart from that, many manuscripts with the national and international lute repertoire must have circulated in the Dutch Republic. Most of this is now lost, but a glimpse can be seen in the lute pieces in Valerius' *Nederlandtsche Gedenck-clanck*, and later in the manuscripts of Johan van Reede. And by a fortunate coincidence the Thysius Lute Book has survived, an imposing example of a lute manuscript such as existed in student circles.

In the end, we may come to the conclusion that the lute was held in high regard in the Dutch Republic. That position is clearly illustrated by the place it occupies in the poetry and especially in the painting of the 17th century, where the instrument is portrayed strikingly often. Not only because the lute in the arts could function as a symbol for a wide-ranging number of things, but mainly because of its prominent place in the musical culture and the social life of the Golden Age.

## SOURCES USED

In what follows, an acknowledgement per chapter is given of the sources and literature consulted. Public sources of general knowledge, such as printed or digital works of reference, are not included.

### *Chapter 1. The lute and its music in Europe*

General **background information** about the lute: Smith, *A history of the lute*; Schlegel & Lüdtke, *The lute in Europe*. The Latin quotations about the lute as the fundament and queen of all instruments are from Finlay, 'Musical Instruments', p. 54. The development of the lute in the 17th century: Lowe, 'Renaissance and Baroque Lutes'. The quotation from Huygens' letter to De la Barre: Rasch, *Driehonderd brieven*, no. 5317; the letter to Döring: *ibid.*, no. 7150.

About the various **related instruments**: the abovementioned reference work by Schlegel & Lüdtke; Spencer, 'Chitarrone, Theorbo and Archlute'; Sayce, 'Continuo lutes'; Grijp & Hamoen, 'De Hooghluit'; Grijp, 'The cittern of Sweelinck and Vermeer'; Rasch, 'De familie Vredeman'. The bookseller's catalogue from 1647: Scheurleer, 'Een catalogus'. About the cittern book by De Swert: Seiffert, *Sweelinckiana*, p. 43. The quotation from Oudaan: *Poëzy*, 2nd volume, pp. 130-131.

Information about the guitar in connection with, respectively, Peerboom, La Grange and Reijnwalt: Servaas van Rooijen, 'Biographische bijdragen'; Balfoort, 'Aantekeningen'; Giskes, 'De vioolmakersfamilies Boumeester en Menslage'. The letter by Huygens about the guitar: Rasch, *Driehonderd brieven*, no. 6887.



### Chapter 2. Prelude: the lute in the Netherlands before 1600

About the **lute in the medieval Netherlands**: see the scattered archive findings published in Te Winkel, *Ontwikkelingsgang*, pp. 62 and 65, and Janse, 'De hoofse liedcultuur', as well as entries from treasurers' accounts in the county of Holland, kindly supplied by Ronald A. van der Spiegel.

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The **Antwerp lute culture and lutenists** are discussed by Godelieve Spiessens: *Leven en werk van de Antwerpse luitcomponist Emanuel Adriaenssen*; 'Adrian Denss, een Duits luitcomponist van Antwerpse komaf'; 'Gregorius Huet, luitspeler en componist'; *Geluit in Antwerpen*. Data about lutenists and lute builders in the Southern Netherlands in the 14th, 15th and 16th centuries are also in Vander Straeten, *Musique aux Pays-Bas*, pp. 368–376.

The catalogue of the library of **Marnix van Sint-Aldegonde**: Brouwer, *The first known auction catalogue*.

About the **Leiden lutenists** Jacob Gerritszoon and Willem Corneliszoon van Duivenbode, see Scholten, 'Jacob Gerritsz., luitspeler en drapenier' and 'Willem Cornelisz., luitspeler en duivenhouder'.

### Chapter 3. Music in the Dutch Republic

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About the **art of song and songbooks**: Scheurleer, *Nederlandsche Liedboeken*; Grijp, *Het Nederlandse lied*; Veldhorst, *Zingend door het leven*; Veldhorst, 'Pharmacy for the body and the soul'.

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The enumeration of representations of **musical instruments in paintings**, the accuracy of these pictures, and the role of the lute in musical culture: Grijp, 'Conclusions and perspectives', partly also on the basis of Sonnema, *Representations of music*.

**Quotations** from Bredero and Baron: Bredero, *Moortje*, p. 225, vs. 1325–6; Baron, *Klucht van Lichthart*, quoted from the entry 'lute' in the *Woordenboek der Nederlandsche Taal*.

About **music teaching** in the Golden Age: Balfoort, *Muziekleven*, pp. 67–70; Giskes, 'Muziekonderwijs in Amsterdam'; Rasch, *Geschiedenis van de Muziek in de Republiek*, Ch. 15: 'Beroeps- en Amateurmusici' – from the same, also the quotations from a letter to Huygens, the treatise by Marnix and Huygens' diary (pp. 27, 25, 2 respectively).

**Students and the lute**, lute manuscripts by students: Burgers & Grijp, *Luitboek van Thysius*, pp. 25, 28–29. About the *album amicorum* of Heinrich Flück: Thomassen, *Aan vrienden gewijd*, pp. 41–43; the quotation from Huygens' autobiography: Rasch, *Geschiedenis van de Muziek in de Republiek*, Ch. 15, p. 35.

#### *Chapter 4. The lutenists of the Golden Age, c.1580–1670*

The text about **Joachim van den Hove** is based on Burgers, *Joachim van den Hove*.

The text on **Nicolaes Vallet** is based on the introduction by Grijp and the source edition by Burgers in Vallet, *Secretum Musarum I*. Additional data about Eduard Hancock and Ritsaert Swift are from the fiches by Bredius, with notes of archive findings on musicians and makers of musical instruments (The Hague, Nederlands Muziek Instituut).

Archive findings and other **data about lutenists** are from the the Bredius fiches, from earlier research (in the 1980s) in the archives of The Hague and Leiden by the present author, from some recent research by Jack Scholten and the author in digitally available archive material (such as baptism, marriage and burial registers, and the old notarial archives of Leiden and Utrecht, and in the Montias database of 17th-century Dutch art inventories), and from the following publications: Servaas van Rooijen, 'Biographische bijdragen'; Dozy, 'Aantekeningen uit het archief van Amsterdam'; Vlam, 'Leidse viool- en klavecimbelmakers'; Vlam and Dart, 'Rosseters in Holland'. About John Jordan see also Balfoort, *Het muziekleven in Nederland*, p. 50, and Bachrach, 'Leiden en de "strolling players"', p. 34. About Bartholomeus van der Bilt: Renckens, 'Enkele archivalia en opmerkingen over Jacobus en Cornelis Biltius'.

About the **Goëss manuscripts** and the conjectures concerning the identity of Fresneau: Crawford, 'The Goëss Lute and Viol Tablatures. General preface' (no page numbers); Kirsch & Meierott, *Berliner Lautentabaturen*, p. 6. Fresneau's works were mostly published in the facsimile editions by Goëss I and Berlijn 40626, in the first part of *The Goëss Tablature Collection* and in Kirsch & Meierott respectively.

#### *Chapter 5. A lutenist of standing: Constantijn Huygens*

Quotations and data are from Huygens' autobiography, published in Blom, *Constantijn Huygens, Mijn leven*; from Zwaan, *Constantijn Huygens' Cluijs-werck*; and from his correspondence about music, published in Rasch, *Driehonderd brieven*. About Huygens' incorrect description of the lute lessons in his early youth: Boogaart, 'Discreten menheer, my onbekent'.

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### Chapter 6. Lute music

The quotation about Huygens' improvisations: Huygens, *Mijn jeugd*, p. 30.

About **the Lute book of Thysius and Adriaen Smout**, see the introduction in Burgers & Grijp, *Het Luitboek van Thysius*, a facsimile edition of the manuscript.

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About the **Goëss manuscripts**: Crawford, 'The Goëss Lute and Viol Tablatures. General preface'. The fact that Johan van Reede was their first owner and partially wrote them himself was kindly communicated by Rudolf Rasch. The Goëss manuscripts were published in facsimile by Tree edition, München: *The Goëss Tablature Collection*.

The **music manuscripts by Huygens**: Post, 'Constantijn Huygens' *Muscae*'.

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About Vallet's lute method, see the abovementioned introduction by Grijp in part 3 of Vallet's *Complete Works* (the *Secretum Musarum I*), p. xxx; the ideas of Stobäus and other lutenists about the way a lute should sound are discussed by O'Dette, 'Some Observations about the Tone of Early Lutenists'.

### Chapter 7. Infrastructure: lute building and the lute trade

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### Chapter 8. The lute in the arts

**General**: Grijp, 'Muziek en literatuur in de Gouden Eeuw'; De Jongh, *Muziek aan de muur*; see also Veldhorst, *Zingend door het leven*.

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was met Roosemont onlangs gaen wand'len buyten' and related poems by Cats, *Proteus*, p. 84; 'Hoe naaw, ô Liefde moet uwe overeenkomst weezen' from Den Elger, *Zinne-beelden der liefde*, p. 297; 'Amor docet musicam' from Rollenhagen, *Nucleus emblematum*, p. 70; 'Eij hemel vreucht wat jeucht ons 't hert' from *Cupido's lusthof*, p. 13; 'Dansen, Spelen end' soetkens Singhen' from *Nieuwen Jeucht Spiegel*, p. 40; 'tGhesanck en Snaren-spel' from idem, p. 26; 'Leert op de Luyt' from Westerbaen, *Gedichten II*, p. 721; 'T'Loef d'welc Lucretia ghewan in alle Landen' from *Nieuwen Jeucht Spiegel*, pp. 180-181; 'Die te veel kust en tast, Wort van den Gheck verrast' from idem, p. 48; the Young man with the worldly pleasures from idem, p. 209; 'Om 'taengenaemste spel dat ick weet in mijn leven' from *Nieuwe Nederduytsche Gedichten ende Raedtselen*, p. 77; 'Wanneer u schoone handt / De snaren kunstigh spant' from Heemskerck, *Inleydinghe tot het ontwerp van een Batavische Arcadia*, p. 137. The song 'Te Venloe al in dye goyde statt' is from *Venlo's liederenhandschrift* (Brussel, Koninklijke Bibliotheek, II 144), f. 82r.

About the **iconography of Dutch painting**, see mainly the publications of Eddy de Jongh: *Zinne- en minnebeelden*; 'Realisme en schijnrealisme'; *Tot lering en vermaak*; *Muziek aan de muur*; 'Muziek en schilderkunst'. See also Kyrova, 'Music in seventeenth-century Dutch painting'. Critical comments on De Jongh's interpretations: Hecht, 'Het vermaak is geen probleem'. The majority of the examples in the text are derived from De Jongh's publications, as well as Giltaij et al., *Zinnen en minnen*, and Biesboer et al., *Satire en vermaak*, supplemented with a number of observations by the present author. The interpretation of Jan Steen, Woman at her toilet is partly derived from David Van Edwards, 'A woman at her toilet'; about the print of master Jan Slechthoofd see De Jongh and Luijten, *Spiegel van alledag*, pp. 63-66. About music as a remedy for melancholy see Veldhorst, 'Pharmacy for the body and the soul'.

### *Chapter 9. Postlude: the lute in the Dutch Republic 1670-1800*

Contact between **Constantijn Huygens** and lute players: Rasch, *Driehonderd brieven*, no. 6754 (Johanne le Gillon); 7093A (Ursula Philipotta van Raesveld); 6796, 6862 (the former about, the latter addressed to Judith Killigrew); 7150 (about Mrs Seullin). About Christiaan Huygens' musical interests: Rudolf Rasch, 'Constantijn en Christiaan Huygens' relatie tot de muziek'.

About **Lord Danby**: Crawford, 'Lord Danby's Lute Book'.

The lute and guitar music by **Derosiers** published in Amsterdam around 1700 in: *Catalogue des livres de musique*. In another catalogue, listing the books for sale at the Rotterdam bookshop of Pieter van der Veer, bound in the back of a book published by the latter in 1701 a separate section *Pieces pour la viole de Gambe, le Clavecin, la Guitare et le Luth* is included (Land, 'Catalogus van allerley musijk'). Most of the music is for harpsichord, but the same titles as in the Catalogue are mentioned here for lute and guitar, except that the lute volume bears a slightly different title: *Suittes pour le Lut avec un violon ou une flûte ...* This would then concern music for lute and one melody instrument. Archive information about Derosiers in the Bredius fiches, under 'De la Vigne'; the quarrel about the viols and theorbos: Giskes, 'De vioolmakersfamilies Boumeester en Menslage', pp. 63-64.

**Wellekens**, *Endehout*, p. 90.

The lute around 1800 and the reference to the poem by **Müller**: Smith, *A history of the lute*, pp. 305-307.

For **Boerhaave**, his love of the lute, the lutes in his estate, his relation to John Clerk and his lute teacher Kremberg, see: Lindeboom, *Herman Boerhaave*; Kooijmans, *Het orakel*, pp. 48-61, 339, 353. Information about Kremberg also from the Leiden Archive, Baptismal Register of the Lutheran church, 1696. Music from Kremberg's *Musicalische Gemüths-Ergötzung* was published digitally by Rockford Mjos; the complete facsimile is also on the internet.

About **Selhof**: Giskes, *400 jaar vioolbouwkunst*, pp. 58-59. Facsimile edition: Hyatt King, *Catalogue of the music library, instruments and other property of Nicolas Selhof*.

**Hagen** in Rotterdam: Scholten, 'P.A. van Hagen, luitspeler en concertzaaldirecteur', including the quotations from poems by Frans de Haes and from de *Rotterdamse Courant*; for the quotation from the musical tour description of Charles Burney, see Burney, *Present state*, Vol. II, pp. 315-316. The *Callicioncino* mentioned in the text probably is a small 'Gallichon', which seems to be a lute-like instrument with single courses (Schlegel & Lüdtke, *The lute in Europe*, pp. 112-116).

**Verschuere Reynvaan**, *Muzijkaal Kunst-woordenboek*, pp. 459-463.





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## INDEX OF NAMES OF PERSONS AND PLACES

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The role of the lute in the 17th-century Dutch Republic can be compared to that of the piano in the 19th century. It was not only the universal instrument for solo music-making, but it was also widely used in ensembles and to accompany singers. The lute was mainly the instrument of the social elite, the aristocracy and prosperous burghers. It was frequently represented in the literature and painting of the period, in which it was used to symbolize a wide range of things, from the most lofty to the most down-to-earth.

This richly illustrated book is the first overview of the history of the lute during the Republic's 'Golden Age'. Every aspect of the instrument is covered: famous and obscure lutenists, professional musicians and more or less gifted amateurs, the lute music that was transmitted in printed books and manuscripts, lute makers and the international lute trade. Furthermore, the instrument's place in the Dutch literature and painting of the period is explored. The book thus contributes to our knowledge of the lute and of the rich culture of the Republic, especially its musical aspect, which has been relatively neglected to date.

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